ECLECTIC SCHOOL READINGS

THE STORY OF OLD FRANCE

BY

H. A. GUERBER

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RECEIVED
JAN 26 1911
LELAND STANFORD JUNIOR UNIVERSITY.

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PREFACE

THE aim of this volume is to give a complete graphic account of the main features of the history of France to 1715 A.D., with as much additional illuminating detail as limited space permits. Besides outlines of the principal events, this narrative includes many biographical sketches, together with the anecdotes and sayings to which allusions are often made in literature, politics, and art. It also gives such data in regard to places, public buildings, and works of art as the well informed like to have at their fingers' ends. As the book is intended mainly for youthful readers, due regard has been paid to moral teachings and to the judicious omission of harmful incidents.

The book is arranged for elementary history classes, and for supplementary reading as well. Some acquaintance with the history of France is most helpful in understanding and studying literature, and English, American, Medieval, and General history. Besides, in schools where French is taught, it can serve as a work of reference for the pupils, who continually stumble across names and allusions which require elucidation. The author, therefore, hopes many schools will find this narrative useful in one or the other connection, and that it will appeal equally to teachers and pupils and perhaps to other readers also.

Many names occur and recur in the text because familiarity with their appearance is desirable from an educational point of view. Where the pronunciation seems difficult, it has been carefully indicated the first time the

name appears, and the indication is repeated in the index. Before the day's reading, a few minutes may profitably be given to the pronunciation of such names by the teacher, with their repetition by the pupils. This process will facilitate the reading and hence increase the interest. Names in parenthesis need not be read aloud, sight acquaintance with them being all that is expected of young readers, so the pronunciation of those names is given in the index only.

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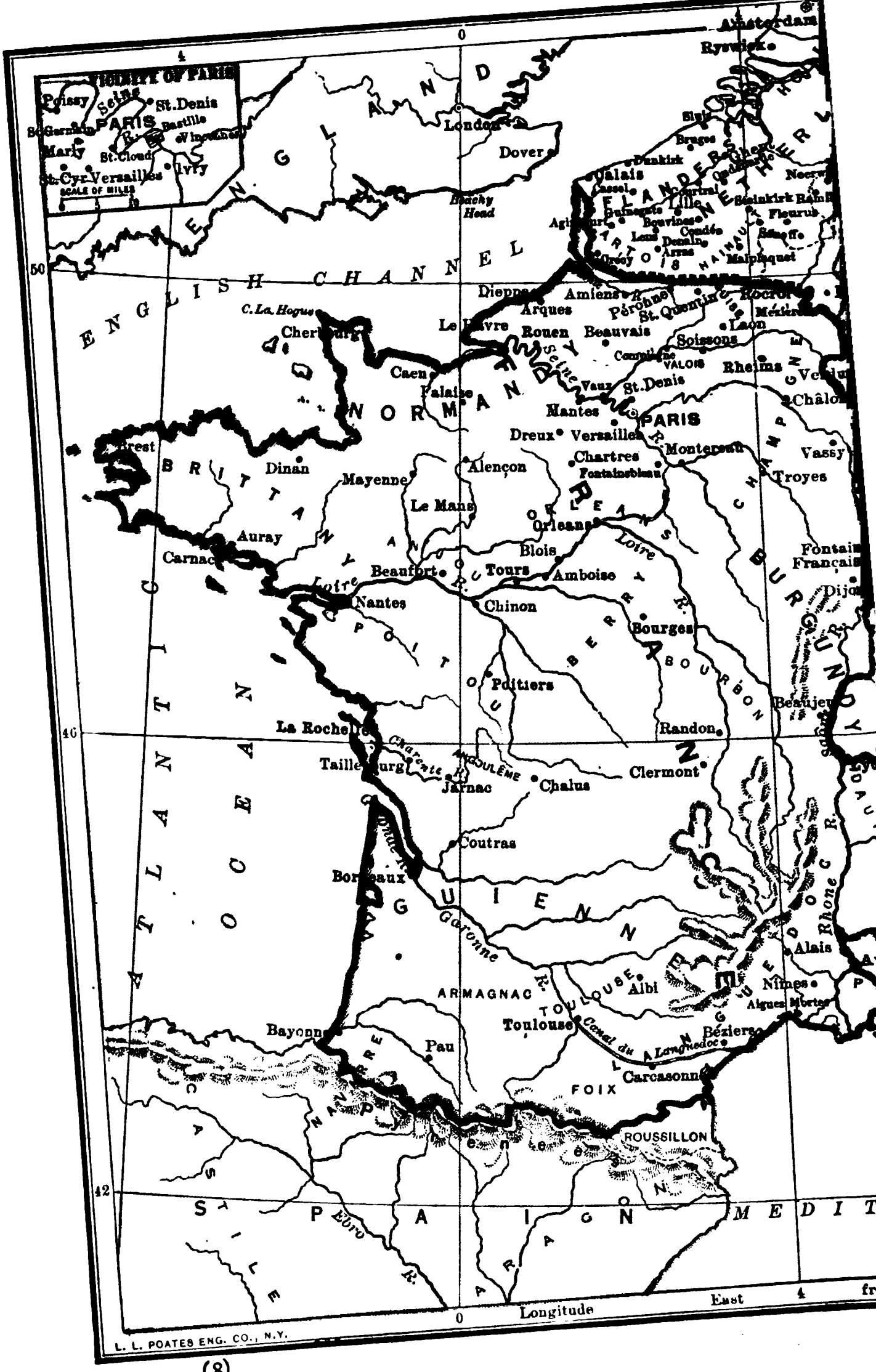

VICINITY OF PARIS
Poissy
Seine
St. Denis
St. Germain
PARIS
Bastille
Vincennes
Marly
St. Cloud
St. Cyr
Versailles
Ivry
SCALE OF MILES
ENGLAND
London
Dover
Beachy Head
ENGLISH CHANNEL
Amsterdam
Ryswick
Bruges
Dunkirk
Calais
Cassel
Courtrai
Lille
Bouvines
Condé
Denain
Arras
Lens
Aglaucourt
Crécy
Steinkirk
Fleurus
Malplaquet
Dieppe
Arques
Amiens
Péronne
St. Quentin
Rocroi
Mézières
Laon
Soissons
Compiègne
VALOIS
Rheims
Châlons
C. La Hogue
Cherbourg
Le Havre
Rouen
Beauvais
Caen
Falaise
Seine
Vaux
St. Denis
Mantes
PARIS
Dreux
Versailles
Montereau
Chartres
Fontainebleau
Vassy
Troyes
Brest
Dinan
Mayenne
Alençon
Le Mans
Orleans
Auray
Carnac
Blois
Tours
Amboise
Beaufort
Loire
Nantes
Chinon
Bourges
Poitiers
Randon
La Rochelle
Charente R.
Taillebourg
Jarnac
Chalus
Clermont
Coutras
Bordeaux
Garonne
Alais
Nîmes
Aigues Mortes
Albi
ARMAGNAC
Toulouse
Canal du Languedoc
Béziers
Bayonne
Pau
Carcasonne
FOIX
ROUSSILLON
Pyrenees
Ebro R.
Longitude
East
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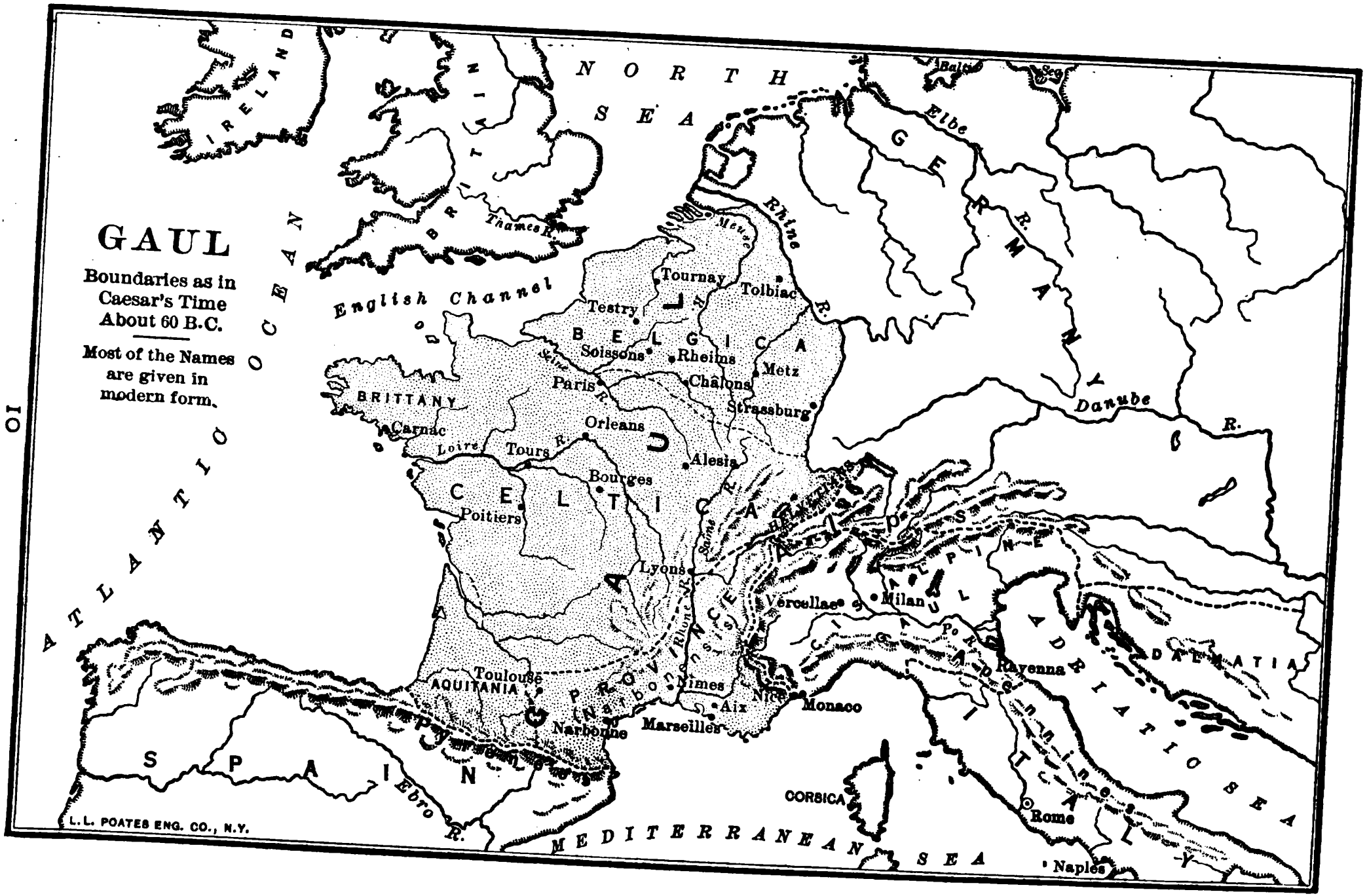
GAUL
Boundaries as in Caesar's Time About 60 B.C.
Most of the Names are given in modern form.
NORTH SEA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
English Channel
IRELAND
BRITAIN
Thames R.
GERMANY
Elbe R.
Rhine R.
Meuse R.
Danube R.
Baltic Sea
BELGICA
Tournay
Tolbiac
Testry
Soissons
Rheims
Metz
Châlons
Strassburg
Paris
Seine R.
BRITTANY
Carnac
Loire R.
Tours
Orleans
Alesia
Bourges
CELTICA
Poitiers
Lyons
Saône R.
Rhône R.
PROVINCE
Narbonensis
Toulouse
AQUITANIA
Narbonne
Nîmes
Aix
Marseilles
Nice
Monaco
Vercellae
Milan
CISALPINE
GAUL
Po R.
Rayenna
ADRIATIC SEA
DALMATIA
Apennines
ITALY
Rome
Naples
CORSICA
SPAIN
Pyrenees
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THE STORY OF OLD FRANCE

I. FRANCE LONG AGO

THE beautiful stretch of land bounded by the Rhine, the Alps, the Mediterranean, the Pyr'enees, and the Atlantic Ocean was once a wild extent of forests and swamps, inhabited by men of a strange race.

These first settlers were so rough and uncivilized that they dwelt in caves, or in round huts which they built from leafy branches. They gathered nuts, berries, and

Painting by Jamet.

A Tragedy of the Stone Age.

other fruits wherever they grew, and with sharp stones or shells they dug up roots which they ate raw. They made stone arrowheads and spearheads, which they used in hunting all kinds of animals, such as the mammoth, the cave bear, and especially a species of wild ox which no longer exists.

The woods were full of game in those early days, and the rivers and streams were alive with fish, which the people caught and ate raw, or dried for future use. The dress of these savages was made of the skins of the animals they had slain, pinned together with big thorns, skewers of hard wood, or sharp fishbones.

What became of the cave men, no one knows. Later settlers were dark-haired I-be'rians and fair-haired Celts, who knew how to plant, keep cattle, cook their food, and make pottery. They were divided into many great families, or tribes, each of which formed a little nation by itself. As each tribe wished to have the best fishing and hunting grounds, and the best pastures, all its members were ready to fight any one else so as to win and keep them.

These early peoples had a religion of their own, and believed in life after death. Therefore they buried their dead in caves or rough stone tombs, placing beside them the weapons, ornaments, and clothing which they thought the dead would need in their new life. They also left in the tombs supplies of food in earthen vessels, so that the dead might have provisions enough for their journey to a better world, and be able to begin their new lives there comfortably. Of course most of the bodies thus buried fell in time into dust; but a few were laid in such dry

caves or tombs that their remains were found hundreds of years later, still well preserved.

Human skeletons, bones of animals and fishes, stone weapons, bone combs, earthen vessels, ornaments, and even shreds of garments have been discovered in such places, and are now carefully treasured in museums. Thus people of the present day can see for themselves what tools, weapons, and household articles these savages used, and can imagine how they lived long years ago.

II. HOW THE GAULS CAME INTO FRANCE

THE first home of the Celtic, or Keltic, people, thousands of years ago, was probably somewhere in eastern Europe or western Asia. As they grew in numbers, from time to time tribes of them were forced to leave home to seek new hunting and fishing grounds, or better pasture for their cattle. Thus at a very early period some of these Celts made their way to the land between the Rhine and the Atlantic, which they disputed with the Iberians, while others settled in the British Isles.[1] At a later period, still many centuries before Christ, they were followed by younger tribes of Celts, or Gauls. As these newcomers were stronger and better armed than the earlier settlers, they soon gained possession of the best parts of the country.

These Gauls were more advanced in knowledge than the earlier Celts and the Iberians, and were taller and

[1] See Guerber's *Story of the English*, pp. 16–20.

better looking, with fair skin, blue eyes, and long hair. They were strong and active and afraid of nothing. They spoke in harsh tones, and often boasted loudly of the deeds they had done or were going to do.

They knew how to work metals, and to spin and weave, so they owned good tools and weapons, and wore breeches, shirts, and cloaks woven from the wool of their sheep. They liked gay colors and pretty ornaments, and therefore fastened their plaid garments with bright metal clasps, some of which still exist, to show that they were no mean artists. Besides some horses, they owned sheep, cows, and great droves of pigs.

The Gauls generally went bareheaded, their long hair being gathered together and tied on top of their heads, whence it streamed loose in the breeze, like a horse's tail. All the warriors took special pride in the length and thickness of their hair, which they carefully combed and often rubbed with rancid butter, so as to keep it thick and glossy. As they shaved off their beards and wore long mustaches, they looked very fierce when they brandished their bronze spears and battle-axes, and uttered their blood-curdling war cry, "Off with their heads!"

The Gauls believed that the souls of brave men passed after death into new, strong bodies; and therefore they rushed into battle without any fear. When one of their chiefs fell, his body was placed on a huge funeral pyre, where it was burned with his horse, his dogs, his weapons, garments, ornaments, utensils, and booty. Sometimes some of his slaves were killed and burned with him, so that the chief should have servants to wait upon him in his new life. The Gauls fancied, too, that

the souls of cowards passed after death into the bodies of vile animals. Each father, therefore, taught his sons to be fearless, so that they should be honored here on earth, and be happy hereafter.

The women were nearly as tall and strong as the men, but even more handsome, and were greatly respected. They wore long linen gowns, and dyed their hair red — a color they greatly admired. They were so brave that they not only encouraged their husbands, sons, and brothers to fight, but often went into battle themselves, side by side with the men.

Most of the warriors went from place to place and fought on foot; but the bravest and richest rode fine horses, around whose necks they hung ghastly necklaces, made of the skulls of the enemies they had slain in battle. A few also drove in war chariots, which had sharp scythes fastened to their wheels. These dashed into the enemy's ranks, mowing them down like ripe grain, if they did not turn and run away in sudden terror.

III. THE PRIESTS OF THE GAULS

THE Gauls believed that the sun, moon, and stars, the thunder, wind, and all the forces of nature were gods, and they worshiped them in the open air, under tall oaks or in the dim recesses of the great forest. Their priests, called Dru'ids, often sacrificed horses on their big stone altars in time of peace; but in time of war, or whenever any danger threatened, human victims were offered up there instead. All the prisoners of war who did not become

slaves were kept for this purpose, and when there were too many captives to sacrifice singly, the Druids crammed them all into huge wicker cages, shaped like men, in which they were burned alive.

The Gauls felt the deepest respect for their Druids, and thought that the men Druids — who were their teachers and judges — knew all the magic arts, while the women Druids could tell exactly what would happen in the future. The Druids were chosen from among the cleverest men and women of the race, and were taught orally by older priests, who knew far more than the rest of the people, but who kept their knowledge secret. They did not, for instance, tell the people that they had found a way to lift heavy weights by means of levers and pulleys. On the contrary, they used such means to raise great stone altars and monuments in secret, and then made the people believe that they had moved the stones into place by magic words, or by a mere touch of their wands.

In many places in France one can still see strange remains of the early work of these Druids, or Gallic priests. There are huge pillars which stand upright, stones of great size arranged in rows or circles ; and large rocks resting upon upright slabs, forming covered passageways or gigantic altars. The most wonderful remains of all can be seen at Carnac′ in Brit′tany, where more than a thousand stones, about sixteen feet high, are set up in the ground in long, straight rows. From afar they look like an army of stone giants. We are told that there were once more than four thousand of them, but some fell down, and many were cut up and carted away to build houses by people near

Druid Stones at Carnac, Brittany.

by, who were too ignorant to respect one of the greatest curiosities of the Old World.

Another trace of the old Druid religion is our custom of decorating our houses at Christmas time with holly and mistletoe—plants loved by the Gauls of old.

The Druids were the most important men among the Gauls; next came the Bards, or singers, who made poems about the deeds of the chiefs, or riders, — the military leaders who formed the third class. Then came the warriors who fought afoot, the workmen, the farmers, and last of all the serfs, or slaves, who were generally captives secured in time of war.

At first each tribe of Gauls held everything in common, and each man was given his share, all the booty being flung into a heap after a battle was over, to be publicly divided by the chiefs. Land, too, was at first held in common, and every spring, at a general meeting, it was portioned out

anew among the families of the tribe. At these assemblies, which all the Gallic warriors attended, it was also decided in what direction war should next be carried. To force men to keep in good fighting trim and to be prompt, the fat warriors were severely punished, and the last to appear at the trysting spot was put to death.

After some time the Gauls saw that a yearly distribution of farms was as bad for the land as for the farmers, so they decided that each family should keep its own fields. The farmers, knowing they would not have to move as soon as spring came around again, were therefore encouraged to build better houses, to fell trees, drain marshes, and to plant and sow diligently. Thus they began the work which was to change that country from a tangled waste into one of the best cultivated regions in the world.

The Gauls were a friendly, hospitable, generous, and very quick-witted race, and soon after settling in the country they began to make many improvements there. They tilled the ground, worked the mines, and, being restless by nature, soon carried on some trade among themselves and with neighboring peoples. Still, as they had at first neither money nor good roads, their trade consisted mostly in barter, and was carried on under great difficulties.

Little by little the Gauls increased in wealth, civilization, and numbers, until in time they spread all over the countries now known as France, Belgium, and Switzerland. This stretch of land, once occupied by Gauls, was therefore known in ancient geography as Gal'lia, or Gaul, the land of the Gauls. Here many towns were founded, some of which still bear the names then given them, although they are now large and prosperous modern cities.

IV. SAILOR STORIES

ALTHOUGH the Gauls were more advanced than the earlier peoples in France, there were other early nations far more civilized than they — such as the Phœnĭ′cians and the Greeks.

The Phœnicians owned only a narrow strip of land in Asia, but they were born sailors and traders, and soon learned to know all the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. When some Phœnician traders first reached the southern shore of Gaul, perhaps as early as 1300 B.C., they made friends with the natives, as usual, and began to trade their goods and trinkets for furs and metal.

The Phœnicians were manufacturers as well as traders, and were anxious to get as much metal as possible to make fine weapons. They therefore taught the Gauls how to become good miners, and encouraged them to bring tin from the British islands,[1] as well as gold, silver, and copper from the interior of Gaul.

For many years the Phœnicians were the only strangers to land in Gaul, but in the ninth century some traders came from the island of Rhodes, and it was they, we suppose, who named the river Rhone after their island. After the Phœnicians and Rhodians came some Greeks, who not only carried on trade with Gaul, but founded some settlements there.

Sailors, you know, like to spin yarns, which are often interesting, even if they are not true. The ancient sailors were like those of to-day. Some of them made up a long story which told of the visit of the god Her′culēs in Gaul.

[1] *Story of the English*, pp. 19–20.

While there, they said, he was attacked by the sons of Neptune, god of the sea, who would have defeated him, had not his father Jupiter caused a rain of stones to fall down from heaven to rout the enemy. If any one doubted this story, he was told to look at the plain near the mouth of the Rhone River, where stones lay in heaps — the very missiles which had rained down from the sky!

It was also said that Hercules founded the city of Nîmes (neem) in Gaul; that he made great gaps in the Alps, so that the people could trade with Italy; and that he then wandered off to Spain, where he tore some huge rocks apart, to open a passage so that the waters of the Mediterranean could flow out into the Atlantic Ocean. The heights on either side of the Strait of Gibraltar were therefore called the Pillars of Hercules.

An interesting story was told about the first voyage of Greeks to Gaul. A Gallic chief, it is said, invited the Greek captain to attend a feast which he was giving to all the unmarried men in the neighborhood. The stranger accepted this invitation, enjoyed the feast, and when it was over, saw the chief's daughter enter the hall, carrying a cupful of wine. Clad in white, with broad ornaments of gold clasped around her arms and waist, and heavy braids of golden hair falling nearly to her feet, this maiden seemed so beautiful that the Greek captain stared at her in surprise.

One of the guests then told him that, according to the custom of the country, the girl was going to choose a husband among her father's guests, by handing the cup she carried to the man who pleased her most. To the amazement of all, the maiden gave this cup to the stranger. He married her and settled down in her country, where he is

said to have founded the city of Marseilles (mar-sālz′) in 600 B.C.

There is no doubt that about this time the Greeks began to trade all along the seashore, and that they founded not only Marseilles but several other cities in southern France. They encouraged art and learning as well as trade, and for a long time Marseilles was the most important city in Gaul; so, many young men went there to study, just as they go to some famous college now.

V. CONQUESTS OF THE GAULS

WHILE many of the Gallic tribes settled down, as we have seen, occupying themselves with tilling and trading, others delighted in nothing but war. About 550 B.C. some of them passed over the Alps to conquer northern Italy. There they founded Mil′an, which became the principal city of Cisal′pine Gaul ("Gaul this side of the Alps"), as the Romans called it, to distinguish it from the other, older Gaul, which was known as Transal′-pine Gaul ("Gaul on the other side of the Alps").

Not content with conquering northern Italy, some of the Gauls later on tried to extend their conquests farther to the south. As you have doubtless read in your Roman history, a great army from Cisalpine Gaul once marched against Rome, defeated the Roman army, murdered the old senators sitting in their chairs in the Forum, and laid siege to the Capitol (390 B.C.); but a Roman general finally defeated them, so that they went back home.[1]

[1] Guerber's *Story of the Romans*, pp. 103–108.

Meantime, other tribes of Gauls had settled in the Danube valley, where one day some of them met Alexander the Great (356–323 B.C.). He admired these bold warriors, and asked what they most feared. It is said that one chief answered proudly, "The Gauls fear nothing, save the falling of the skies!" and that another added, "And if the skies fall, we will hold them up with our lances."

Descendants of these bold Gauls invaded Greece about forty years after Alexander's death, to rob the temple of Del'phi of its treasures. A Greek writer, however, says that as the Gauls approached Delphi a sudden thunderstorm and earthquake filled their hearts with superstitious terror, so that, brave as they were, they turned and fled! The Greeks believed that their god Pan had frightened the barbarians away from the temple, and ever since then, people seized by a sudden terror are said to be "panic-stricken."

Some of these Gauls wandered restlessly on to Asia, where they settled in a country known as Gala'tia, which became a Roman province about two hundred years later. In the New Testament you will find an epistle addressed to these Galatians, or eastern Gauls.

There were Gauls from the Danube in the army which Pyr'rhus led against Rome.[1] Indeed, many Gauls were so anxious to fight that they offered their services to any nation making war. This gave rise to the Roman saying, "No army without Gauls." The Cisalpine Gauls were conquered by the Romans about 220 B.C.; but many of them helped Han'nibal attack Rome, and had to be conquered a second time.[2]

[1] *Story of the Romans*, pp. 115–121. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 128–139.

The Romans were just thinking that it might be wise to seize also the southern part of Transalpine Gaul, and they were trying to find a good excuse to begin war, when the people of Marseilles asked for Roman aid against some of their Gallic neighbors. The Romans gladly sent an army, which soon found itself face to face with a much larger army of Gauls. The Gallic chief scornfully remarked that there were not enough Romans to furnish his dogs with a square meal! But when the battle began, he found that they were no mean foes, for with their better weapons and their better training, they utterly defeated the fierce Gauls. The Gauls said, however, that they were beaten because their hearts were filled with terror by the great size and loud trumpeting of some war elephants in the Roman ranks.

By this and other victories the Romans conquered the southeastern part of Gaul, from the Alps to the Pyrenees (125–120 B.C.). This territory was long known as the Province, and the name Provence (pro-väNss′) is still retained by a small part of it. The city of Narbonne (nar-bōn′) was founded as the capital, other Roman towns soon arose there, and civilization made rapid progress.

VI. TWO GREAT BATTLES

THE people of the Province were both peaceful and happy, when a new danger suddenly threatened to destroy them. News came that two great tribes of barbarians from the shores of the Baltic Sea — the Cim′bri

and Teu'tons — were marching southward in search of new homes. As they were not nearly so civilized as the Gauls, they recklessly destroyed everything they found which they could not appreciate or carry away.

Barbarians invading Gaul.

The peaceful Gauls, unable to defend themselves against these great hordes of barbarians, fled in terror, watching from afar the destruction of their towns and farms, while the Romans and fighting Gauls bravely tried to drive the invaders away. But their efforts were vain against such huge numbers; they were defeated in battle after battle. The invaders swept on through Gaul, and even crossed the Pyrenees into Spain. Still, knowing that the barbarians

would soon return to ravage the Province on their way to Italy, the Romans sent Ma'rius, their greatest general, thither to block the way and prevent their passing the Alps.

While waiting near Aix, Marius built fortifications and drilled his men, until he felt sure they could stand any fatigue or hardship, and would fear nothing. Fortunately, the invaders divided their forces: the Cimbri hastened directly to the Alps, while the Teutons tried first to defeat Marius. When they came up, they tauntingly called out to the men: "Have you any messages to send to your wives in Italy? We shall be with them soon!"

The Roman soldiers, weary with many months of waiting, burned to avenge these insults, but Marius held them in check until the right time came, and then they fought so bravely that they utterly destroyed the immense force of barbarians. The men were slain, and their wives, rather than fall into the hands of the enemy, killed their children and defended themselves until they, too, were slain. Even the Teuton dogs had been trained to fight so fiercely that the Romans had to kill them before they could draw near the rude wagons which were heavily laden with spoil.

It is said that 150,000 bodies lay on the ground after this awful battle near Aix (102 B.C.). In fact, so much blood was shed, and so many bodies decayed there, that the soil was made rich; and many years after, fences were still built of the bones of the fallen barbarians.

Marius having met and defeated one division of the foe, hastened back into Italy to check the advance of the second, for the Cimbri were now pouring over the Alps into Italy. On coming near Marius and his army, the

Cimbri haughtily demanded land for themselves and for their allies the Teutons, who, they declared, would soon want some too. Marius grimly answered that the Teutons already had all the land they needed, and that they could keep it forever; then, seeing the Cimbri did not understand the ghastly joke, he showed them some of the bloody heads of their slain allies.

The sight of these horrible trophies, instead of frightening the Cimbri, only spurred them on to greater efforts. They made ready for battle by binding themselves together with ropes to keep their ranks firm; but their movements were thus hampered, and in spite of their bravery they met the same fate as the Teutons.[1]

It was thus that Marius saved the Roman Republic from the northern barbarians, and his two great victories (near Aix and in Italy) won him so much renown that he became a great political leader at Rome. But his disputes with a powerful rival soon brought about a civil war, which lasted a long while, and prevented the complete conquest of Gaul for nearly half a century.

VII. CÆSAR IN GAUL

IN 58 B.C. news came to Rome that the Helve'tians — a people living in the country now called Switzerland — were about to leave their homes in a body, and cross Gaul to settle near the Atlantic Ocean. As these people were far from civilized, the Gauls dreaded their passage,

[1] *Story of the Romans*, pp. 157, 158.

and therefore implored the Romans to prevent their leaving home.

In answer to this appeal, Julius Cæsar went northward with a Roman army. He won a battle and forced the Helvetians to return to their old homes, to which they had set fire on leaving. He then asked for an interview with a German chief, Ariovis'tus, who had invaded Gaul and had camped with his warriors near the river Saône (sōn). The barbarian haughtily answered: "If I needed Cæsar, I would go to him; if Cæsar needs me, let him come to me."

This proud answer greatly displeased the messengers, who informed Ariovistus that he had better take care lest he rouse their anger; but he fearlessly replied: "No one has ever attacked me yet without repenting of it. We will measure our strength whenever Cæsar pleases, and he will then learn what it is to face warriors who have not slept under a roof for the past fourteen years."

This defiant message so frightened the Roman soldiers that they refused to go a step farther until Cæsar cried: "If all others forsake me, I will go on alone with the tenth legion; that one will not desert me!" Ashamed of their cowardice, the other soldiers now obeyed, but they were so sure they were going to die that they all made their wills before they went into battle.

Cæsar pressed on with his army and beat Ariovistus. His first campaign in Gaul thus made the Romans masters of all the valley of the Rhone and Saône rivers.

In his second and third campaigns, Cæsar fought in what is now Belgium, and the western part of France, and nearly completed the conquest of all Gaul. But the people were not yet ready to obey Rome tamely, so in later

campaigns Cæsar had to put down several revolts of different tribes, and was even obliged to cross the Rhine to awe the Germans, who encouraged the Gauls in their efforts to drive the hated Romans out of their country.

Cæsar was not only a brave general but a well-educated man, and he wrote an account of his Gallic wars, which is the best history of what he did. In that book, part of which all the Latin pupils read in school, he cleverly described the people he met, who were the ancestors of three of the leading nations in Europe — the French, the Germans, and the British.

The most serious of all the revolts in Gaul was planned by the chief of a central tribe, named Vercinget'orix. He was tall, strong, and very brave, and had so great an influence over his people that they swore never to see their wives and children again until they had passed twice through the ranks of their enemies.

But the Gauls were still barbarians, and unfortunately they did not obey this chief perfectly. When he commanded those near Cæsar's army to destroy all their stores, they coolly decided to save their principal fortified city (now Bourges), where they had large supplies. Cæsar took this town and thus secured plentiful supplies for his legions, which might otherwise have starved there in the winter season.

Cæsar then attacked and defeated several tribes separately before besieging A-le'si-a, a place where Vercingetorix and the main part of his warriors had taken refuge. Alesia was perched on a high hill, and was well fortified. Not being able to reach it, Cæsar built earthworks all around it, so that none of the Gauls could pass

in or out, and mounted guard so vigilantly that he baffled all the warriors who tried to break through his blockade to reach their besieged countrymen.

The Gauls held out until no food of any kind was left, and then the starved garrison, having suffered untold agonies, had to surrender (52 B.C.). Vercingetorix, hoping to secure better terms for his people, rode down alone into Cæsar's camp, in full battle array, galloped up to the spot where the general was seated, proudly flung his arms down at his feet, and dismounting, sat down in the dust before him, silently holding out his hands for the chains which he knew were awaiting him. Vercingetorix was bound and taken to Rome, where a few years later he appeared a captive in Cæsar's triumph. When that last humiliation was over, he was taken back to prison and beheaded by a slave, while his conqueror was making his thanksgiving offering in the Roman Capitol.

The attempt of Vercingetorix to free his country from the yoke of the Romans was so brave and so noble that he is considered a great hero and the first French champion of liberty. His statue has therefore been placed on the very spot where he once made his hopeless stand against the Roman legions under Cæsar, and his name is well known and dearly loved by all French children.

VIII. GAUL UNDER THE ROMANS

DURING Cæsar's last campaigns in Gaul, he captured so many prisoners that it is said every soldier in the Roman army had at least one Gallic slave

to wait upon him; but in spite of crushing defeats the Gauls rose again and again, until Cæsar punished the rebels by chopping off their right hands. This ended the Gallic wars.

In eight years — from 58 to 50 B.C. — Cæsar made eight campaigns in Gaul, took eight hundred towns, conquered three hundred tribes, and defeated more than three hundred thousand warriors. About one third of the people were killed, and another third were reduced to slavery, so when the war was over only about one third of the Gauls were still left in their old homes.

It is because Cæsar accomplished so very much in so short a time that he is considered the greatest general in Roman history. He afterwards showed himself a wise statesman by allowing the conquered Gauls to sit in the Roman senate, to fight in the Roman legions, and to enjoy all the rights of Roman citizenship, so that they soon made friends with their former enemies, the Romans; and in later times, Gauls even became Emperors of Rome.

Roman generosity toward these conquered foes thus bore good fruit. The Gauls in the southeastern part of the country — the first to submit quietly to the new rule, — quickly learned the Roman language and ways. Under the direction of their conquerors they cut down forests, drained marshes, built towns, and erected beautiful temples, aqueducts, baths, theaters, and houses, some of which still exist to call forth the admiration of travelers. When the Romans first came into Gaul, the greater part of the country was wild and densely wooded. They found the soil very rich and productive, and before long the greater part of France was turned into cultivated fields,

olive groves, and vineyards. Commerce and industry increased rapidly.

The Romans fixed the capital of Gaul at Lyons. Not only was this city centrally located, but it also stood at the junction of two great rivers, the Rhone and the Saône, and was the starting point for four great Roman roads, which

Roman Aqueduct near Nîmes.

led to the Rhine, to the Channel, to the ocean, and to the Mediterranean Sea. As these roads were the only good ones in the country at that time, they were much used, and any traveler going from Rome, or from the south to any part of northern France, Germany, or Britain, was pretty sure to pass through Lyons on his way.

After Cæsar died, his nephew Augustus became Emperor, and ruled over Italy and all the Roman provinces. Although in some ways less generous to the Gauls than Cæsar, he treated them well, and visited Lyons, where he

made a speech which is still preserved there on tablets of bronze.

He divided Gaul into four provinces, ruled by consuls, allowed the cities to govern themselves, established schools, and placed Roman legions along the Rhine to protect the country from the inroads of the northern barbarians. The Romans now had to defend Gaul, because most of the people left in that country were peaceful farmers and workmen.

Augustus and his successors forbade human sacrifices in Gaul, but for a time they allowed the Druids to go on practicing their religion, and gave the Gallic gods a place beside their own in the Roman Panthe'on, or temple for all gods. Then they cleverly showed the Gauls that there was, after all, very little difference between the two modes of worship, for both adored a god of war, for instance, although he was called Mars in Rome and He'sus in Gaul. Thus, little by little, they brought about a change in religion, so that Druid worship was nearly over by the middle of the first century of the Christian era.

The Gauls were so clever that some of them not only learned all the Romans could teach them, but soon became greater scholars, better builders, and more skillful workmen than their teachers. They were quite comfortable at first under Roman rule, although some of the tax collectors proved dishonest, and asked more than was due. This was, however, against the wish of the Emperor Augustus, and when he discovered that one man had done so, he went to him and accused him of stealing. This man, knowing the Emperor loved money, escaped punishment by giving Augustus all the stolen goods, saying: "Behold the treasure I

have gathered; I was afraid if the Gauls kept so much gold they would use it against thee; I now deliver it to thee." It is said that Augustus accepted this bribe, pretending to believe that the tax collector had stated the truth!

Unjust taxes caused several revolts among the Gauls during the first century of the Christian era. One of these started in Belgium, where the chiefs, finding themselves defeated, chose death in preference to slavery. Another revolt, a few years later, was led by a Gaul who, on asking a Druidess for advice, was forbidden to fight before the new moon. The Romans, having discovered this, attacked the rebels before the time appointed, and as the Gauls dared not disobey the orders of their prophetess, nearly all of them were slain.

Sabi'nus, one of their number, who had been elected king, seeing no other hope of escape, set fire to his own house and, plunging through the flames, took refuge in a stone vault or cellar, where the fire could not reach him. His own companions, as well as the Romans, thought he had perished, and only his wife and one faithful slave were aware of his being still alive.

To beguile his loneliness, his faithful wife forsook all and dwelt nine years with her husband in his dark retreat, where they brought up the two little sons sent to cheer them. Only twice in all those years did the poor woman leave the vault, and then it was only in hopes of discovering some safe means of escape for her husband. Meantime, the trusty slave daily brought them food, until a suspicious Roman watched him and discovered the secret.

The whole family was then dragged before the Emperor Vespa'sian, and the poor woman fell at his feet with both

her sons, crying, "Behold! I nursed these children in the tomb, that we might be more to implore your forgiveness!" But the Emperor had resolved to make an example of Sabinus, and coldly sentenced him to death. The unhappy wife thereupon exclaimed, "Then put me to death also, for I have been happier with him in the darkness underground than you have ever been on your imperial throne!"

Her wish was granted: husband and wife died, as they had lived, together; but their children received a good education, and a famous Roman writer tells us that he met one of them in the temple of Delphi many years later.

IX. THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYRS

DURING the second century of our era, a great change took place, not in the government, but in the religion, of Gaul. The Romans had fancied that the time would soon come when their religion would entirely replace that of the Druids, but Christianity was about to overthrow both kinds of pagan worship.

The new religion was first preached by Jesus and his disciples in the first half of the first century. The earliest Christian church in Gaul was founded at Lyons, about a hundred years later, by the good bishop Pothi'nus, who preached the Gospel and won many converts, not only among the rich and learned, but also among the poor and ignorant people of the town. For the first time, religion now taught that rich and poor, master and slave, are equal in the eyes of God, so the poor and unhappy welcomed it as gladly as their more fortunate fellow-citizens.

As the Romans generally did not care what religion the people practiced, so long as they obeyed the laws, they did not trouble the Christians in Gaul, until a converted soldier once refused to join in pagan rites in their temple. This refusal made the Romans inquire into the new belief, and what they learned made them so angry that they wished to end it at once. The Emperor, therefore, ordered his people to worship none but the old Roman gods in future.

The Christians could not obey this order; so about thirty years after the first church was founded in Lyons, the first persecution was begun there. Christians were beaten and tortured in many horrible ways. Some were beheaded, others stoned to death, and many were exposed in the arena, to be torn limb from limb and eaten by wild beasts, while the heathen Gauls and Romans applauded.

Still, in spite of all persecution, the Christians would not give up their faith. The founder of the church at Lyons, now more than ninety years old, was stoned to death; but he was no truer or more steadfast than the poor little slave girl Blandi'na, who, after being horribly tortured in all manner of ways, was finally torn to pieces by lions and tigers. But throughout these tortures, whenever urged to save herself by cursing Christ, she firmly answered: "I am a Christian, and no evil is done among us."

This brave slave girl has been honored by the Catholic Church, and has received the title of saint, which had never before been bestowed upon any person born in Gaul. Her name therefore stands first upon the roll of French saints and martyrs, and a church still stands on the spot where her bones were buried.

X. THE PATRON SAINT OF FRANCE

ALTHOUGH widely scattered by persecution, the remaining Christians in Gaul proved true to their faith. When the persecution was over, some came back to Lyons, where they began to preach again, and won many converts; for many people, who had hesitated until then, could not help believing in a religion which gave old men and delicate girls as much courage, even under torture, as any soldier had ever shown on the field of battle.

A new preacher, I-re-ne'us, bishop of Lyons, was so good and holy that even during his lifetime he was called a saint, and as he was very learned too, he is known as the "Light of the West," and is considered one of the Fathers of the Church. Ireneus taught until he perished in the second persecution, which took place about twenty-five years after the first.

Another early bishop was St. Denis (sānt dĕn'ĭs, or, săn dē-nee') who went to Paris, then only a very small city on an island in the Seine (sân). St. Denis preached so successfully here, that when the second persecution began, he was head of a thriving church, built on the very spot where Notre Dame (nō'tr' däm) now stands, and where Jupiter's temple had once been erected. Three hundred of his disciples bravely suffered great tortures with him, and then were beheaded on a hill which now forms part of the city, and which is still known as the Martyrs' Hill (Montmartre). A good woman is said to have buried the holy bishop's remains where the church of St. Denis now stands. A wonderful legend soon arose about him, to the effect that, when his head was struck off, he arose and picked it up

and walked some distance away with it! For this reason he is often shown in paintings and sculptures with his severed head held in his hands. St. Denis is the patron saint

Painting by Bonnat.

The Martyrdom of St. Denis.

of France, and his name was the watchword for French soldiers for many centuries; so his burial place has always been greatly honored, his bones regarded as sacred relics, and his real life and death are often represented in art,

although not so frequently as the queer legend which you have just heard.

There were ten awful persecutions in Gaul in about two hundred and fifty years. During that time many martyrs in different places were persecuted, and if you were to hear all they endured, you would see how very brave they were, and why so many people hold their names in such great honor.

One of the most noted converts of the fourth century was the man since known as St. Martin. It seems that he was a handsome and rich young Roman officer, who was almost ready to accept the Christian faith, when the following adventure happened to him in Gaul.

One cold night, on riding home from a feast, wrapped in a fine new cavalry cloak, he saw a poor beggar shivering with the cold. The young officer, who had a very feeling heart, quickly drew his sword, and cutting his big cape in two, gave half of it to the beggar to keep him warm. That night, in a dream, Martin saw Jesus wearing the half cloak he had given the beggar, and heard him tell the angels that his servant Martin, although not baptized, had nevertheless obeyed his command to clothe the naked.

When Martin awoke, he asked to be baptized; soon after, he left the army, and entering the Church, became bishop of Tours (toor). He preached to such good purpose that there were soon no heathen left in Gaul, and he and his disciples destroyed all the old pagan temples and altars left there.

The place where St. Martin was buried became holy, and for many years no criminal could be touched as long as he was within the sacred inclosure at Tours. Unlike

St. Denis, St. Martin died a natural death, for Christian persecutions came to an end when one of the Roman Emperors became a Christian (312).[1]

XI. HOW THE FRANKS CAME INTO GAUL

THE Romans ruled over Gaul nearly five hundred years. During the first two centuries the people improved, and the country prospered greatly, for the Romans thought of their good and worked hard to secure it. But the bad example set by many Emperors, and by the rich men at Rome, was in time followed by most of their countrymen, who became lazy and selfish.

As they needed more and more money and slaves, they laid always heavier taxes upon the Gauls, who had been happy and industrious as long as they were fairly treated, but who now became poor and sullen, and were finally so discouraged that many of them ceased to work. Peasants, who had lost all ambition, forsook their fields and wandered aimlessly around, stealing whenever they were hungry, and hating any and every one who was better off than they.

A mob of such angry peasants began a revolt in the fourth century, and although these people were soon brought to order, other revolts like this frequently took place in Gaul during the next three hundred years. Orderly people suffered much from such violence as well as from the inroads of the barbarians, who often crossed the Rhine when the Roman army began to weaken.

In fact, the state of affairs in Gaul was so unsatisfactory

[1] *Story of the Romans*, pp. 268, 269.

that Julian was sent there by the Emperor in 355 A.D. to restore order. After putting down a peasant revolt, he spent one winter in Paris, where he built a palace for himself, the ruins of which can still be seen there in a park. Next, Julian defeated seven barbarian chiefs near Strass'burg. There, he first met the Franks, a tribe of brave German warriors who had already often crossed the Rhine to raid northern Gaul, and from whom, later, were to come the names France and French. Julian made friends with this tribe, took some of its warriors into his own army, and allowed the rest to settle between the Rhine and the Meuse, on condition that they should not permit any other German nations to cross the river.

Julian had scarcely finished this arrangement when he was made Emperor in his turn. Not long after his death, the vast Roman Empire was divided into two parts, and governed by Emperors of the East and of the West. During this time, while the Romans were growing weaker and weaker, the Franks kept growing stronger and stronger, until they became so daring that one of them actually killed a Roman Emperor in 392 A.D. and set up another in his place.

These Franks were heathen; their name meant "bold, fearless, open"; but they were so grasping that the Gauls used to say, "Take a Frank for a friend, but never for a neighbor!" Very little is known about their origin, except that they belonged to the German branch of the great human family. Later on, however, when people learned to read the old Greek and Latin poems, and everybody talked about the siege of Troy, a story was invented as follows: One of the Trojan heroes, Hector, had a son

named Francus, who escaped from the burning city and lived to become the father of a family, the Franks, which in time formed a great nation.

At the yearly meeting, which was called the Field of March or May, the Franks elected a chief, whom they then raised upon a shield, and carried several times around the assembly on their shoulders. They also made laws for all the people of the tribe.

Some Frankish laws provided that if one man killed another, on purpose or by accident, he should atone for it by paying a fine. The amount depended on the rank of the person slain; while a large fine was paid for killing a chief, a slave's life was held to be worth even less than that of a horse or a cow! Any Frank accused of crime could be called before the assembly. If a certain number of persons did not appear to swear to his innocence, he was obliged to submit to a test, or ordeal, to decide whether he was guilty or not.

There were different kinds of ordeals. The accused was sometimes bound hand and foot and cast into the water. If he floated, he was considered guilty, and punished; but if he sank, he was held to be innocent. Often this did not do him much good, for by the time the judges were quite sure he would not float, and pulled him out of the water, he might be dead! Sometimes the accused was forced to dip his hand into boiling water or oil. If his burns healed quickly, he was acquitted; but if his recovery proved slow, he was punished as guilty. Some of the accused were compelled to walk blindfold over red-hot plowshares placed at short intervals along the ground. If they managed to avoid touching these, they were allowed

to go free; but if they were burned, they were declared guilty.

The Franks were great warriors, and loved fighting, but even they were frightened when they heard that two hundred thousand barbarians, the Van'dals and Burgun'dians, were nearing the Rhine (406). They made a desperate effort to check the advance of these foes, and killed some twenty thousand, but the rest managed to cross the Rhine on the ice, swept over a great part of the country, and destroyed so much that their name became a by-word; we still speak of reckless destruction as an act of "vandalism."

Many of these barbarians passed over into Spain, but the Burgundians settled in eastern Gaul. These people became very skillful manufacturers of all sorts of tools, ornaments, and playthings, for they were born carpenters and wood carvers, and their descendants still excel in this kind of work.

Meantime, another great host of fierce barbarians, the Vis'igoths, took possession of northern Spain and southwestern Gaul. They quickly adopted Roman ways, and their realm in Gaul, stretching from the Pyrenees to the river Loire (lwär), bore the old Roman name of Aquita'nia. Their capital was Toulouse (too-looz'), where their king settled down with his newly won bride, a sister of the Roman Emperor.

XII. THE FIRST KINGS

THE Franks, who had not been able to prevent the arrival of the Burgundians or Visigoths in Gaul, now thought it high time to secure a larger slice of the country

for themselves, and therefore began to rob the Gauls and Romans. The result was nearly twenty years of warfare, during which the chiefs of the Sa'lian Franks (Western Franks) greatly extended their territory. But all fighting among the different nations in Gaul came to a stop when they heard that an immense army of the terrible Huns was coming.

These barbarians were even worse than the Vandals; so thorough was their destruction, that land which they had conquered often lay waste for years. The Huns were of the yellow or Mongolian race, and were as ugly as they were fierce and cruel. They had small eyes, flat noses, big ears, and bushy hair. They traveled on horseback, and lived on mares' milk and on horse meat, which they carried between steed and saddle, to make it tender before devouring it raw. Their fierce king, At'tila, was known as the "Scourge of God," and boasted that "Grass ceases to grow where the horse of Attila has trod."

The Gauls fled before him. Twenty of their towns lay in ruins, and the Parisians were about to desert their city also, when a young shepherd girl, Gen-e-vieve', spoke to them, saying: "Forsake not your homes, for God has heard my prayers. Attila shall retreat." The Parisians, knowing how holy Genevieve was, believed her words, and remained quietly in their homes. To their great relief, Attila, instead of attacking Paris, suddenly changed his plans and went on to Or'leans. This city was saved from ruin by the bravery of its bishop, who kept up the people's courage and made them resist Attila, until the combined armies of the Romans, Gauls, Franks, Visigoths, and Burgundians could meet the mighty Huns.

Attila, hearing that they were coming, forsook the siege of Orleans, and went to the plain of Châlons (shä-lôN′), where was fought one of the great battles of the world (451). One hundred and sixty thousand men were slain there, and such was their hatred that it was said their spirits continued to fight in the air for the next three days! When the battle was over, the Huns were so sorely beaten that Attila was glad to retreat.

The chief of the Salian Franks at Châlons was Merove′us, and the victory added greatly to his renown. He is considered the founder of the Merovin′gian line, or dynasty, of Frankish kings in Gaul.

His son, Chil′deric, was so disliked that he had to leave the country and spend eight years in exile beyond the Rhine. But he finally came back with a German wife, who on her wedding night, it is said, foretold in an allegory that the first Merovingians would be brave, but that their successors would be cruel, revengeful, mean, sly, and cowardly, each member of the royal family sinking lower, until the last would be driven away by the smallest among his subjects.[1] You will see that this "prophecy" — which of course was made long after, and not before, the events — came true as you go on reading this story.

After ruling the Franks for some time, Childeric died and was buried in state in northern Gaul. Nearly twelve hundred years after, his tomb was opened, and besides ashes and bits of bone, there was found within it a ring bearing the portrait of a long-haired man, a stylus, a crystal globe, an ax-head, and some remains of a red silk cloak, to which still clung many little ornaments in the

[1] See Guerber's *Legends of the Rhine*, pp. 147–148.

shape of golden bees. These treasures are now carefully preserved in a French museum, and when France became an Empire, Napoleon adopted the golden bees of the Merovingian king as one of the emblems of the new dynasty which he founded.

When Childeric died, the Salian Franks raised Clo'vis, his fifteen-year-old son, on a shield, thus making him their leader. They owned as yet only a very small part of northern Gaul. Their rivals were Romans and Gauls in the north of the country, Bret'ons (Celts) in the west, Visigoths in the south, and Burgundians in the east. Still, Clovis was very ambitious, and though young, was eager to win land and wealth.

He began by attacking and defeating the Romans at Soissons (swä-sôN'), 486. Then his men scattered and roamed about in search of spoil. As they were not Christians, they plundered churches, and among other things they took a golden vase from a church at Rheims (rēmz, or răNss). But St. Rémi (rā-mee'), the bishop of Rheims, happened to be a friend of Clovis, and asked that the vase might be returned. When the booty was collected at Soissons, ready to be divided among the warriors, Clovis therefore asked that the vase might be given to him over and above his share. All the soldiers were willing save one, who angrily broke the vase with his battle-ax, saying, "No; you shall have no more than is yours by lot!"

A Frankish chief had no right to more than his share of the booty, so Clovis dared not punish the man then and there, but he was not of a forgiving nature. Noticing, one day, that there was something wrong with this man's arms, Clovis snatched them from him and flung them down

on the ground. Then, when the man stooped to pick them up, Clovis suddenly cleft his skull with his battle-ax, crying, "Remember the vase of Soissons!"

XIII. CONVERSION AND CONQUESTS OF CLOVIS

THE victory at Soissons made Clovis master of a large part of northern Gaul. An early attempt against Paris, however, was not successful. It is said that Genevieve relieved the starving inhabitants by sending them boatloads of provisions, and that she pleaded with Clovis, who more than once, at her request, set prisoners free. Because she saved the city from the Huns and from famine, Genevieve is regarded as its patron saint, and in a church in Paris (the Pantheon) there are many pictures representing the good deeds done by this brave little shepherd girl, from the time when she first received the bishop's blessing and became a Christian, until she died in Paris, at more than fourscore years and ten, after having spent all her life in good deeds and prayer.

By this time Clovis was anxious to marry. Hearing of Clotil'da, — a niece of the king of Burgundy, who, according to the legend, had murdered her parents, — he sent a messenger to her. Clotilda gladly consented to become Clovis's wife, and as her uncle dared not refuse to let her go, they were soon married at Soissons, the Frankish capital.

Clotilda was a Catholic; so she and the priests wished to have Clovis become one, too. This he refused to do, although he allowed his first son to be baptized to please

his wife. But when the babe sickened and died a few days after the ceremony, he felt very sure that his gods were angry with him. When Clotilda therefore begged that her second child might receive baptism also, Clovis consented with great reluctance, and when this boy too fell dangerously ill, he bitterly exclaimed that it would surely die like the first! But Clotilda assured him that his gods had no power whatever over their children, and that her God would yet grant her prayers and let the boy live. As the child did live, Clovis's faith in his heathen deities was shaken, and he even began to think that, after all, his wife's God might be more powerful than they.

Ten years after the famous battle of Soissons, some Germans crossed the Rhine, and Clovis went forth with all his army to meet them at Tolbi'ac (496). During the fierce battle, Clovis called on his fathers' gods for help, without avail. Then suddenly he cried aloud: "Christ Jesus, in whom Clotilda believes, I have called upon my gods in vain. Help Thou me!" And he vowed that if he won the day, he would become a Christian, as his wife wished. Legend asserts that as soon as Clovis had made this vow, the skies opened, and angels flew down to help him drive away the Germans. We know that Clovis won so great a victory that day that no savage German tribes ever tried to come and settle in France after that.

On his return from the battle of Tolbiac, Clovis listened for the first time to the story of Christ. When the priest (St. Rémi) described how He had been crucified, Clovis grew very angry, clenched his fists, and loudly cried, "Ah, if I had only been there with my Franks, I would have taught those Jews a lesson!"

It had been decided that Clovis should be baptized in the church at Rheims, on Christmas Day, and the priests, in their joy at securing such an important convert, decked the church and city with such magnificence that Clovis stared about him in wonder, and asked, "Is this the heaven which you have promised me?"

"No," answered the priest, "it is not heaven, but the road that leads to it."

Painting by Blanc.

Victorious Return of Clovis.

Clovis was then led to the font, where St. Rémi said, "Bend your head, O chief. Worship what you have hitherto burned, and burn what you have worshiped." There is a legend that just then a dove flew down from heaven, bringing to St. Rémi the vial of holy oil which was used to anoint Clovis and all the kings of France who came after him. This vial (ampulla) of holy oil was carefully treasured in Rheims until the Revolution (1794), when it

was broken to pieces, but even then the priests managed to save a few drops of the sacred oil for future use.

Clovis's two sisters and three thousand of his warriors were baptized with him that day in the church of Rheims, and because Clovis was the first king anointed by Roman Catholic priests, he was called the "Eldest Son of the Church," a title which was borne by all his successors on the throne of France.

Although a Christian in name, Clovis was very much the same old pagan, for when once asked how long he wished the new church to be, which he had ordered built in Paris, he hurled his battle-ax as far as he could, and said that the distance between his weapon and the hand which threw it should be the length of the building. This famous edifice soon received the bones of St. Genevieve, and Clovis, his wife, and descendants were laid to rest there in their turn. Although the original building is now nearly all gone, some traces of it can still be seen.

After his baptism, so the story runs, Clovis said it was high time to avenge Clotilda's wrongs; so he made war against the Burgundians, whom he defeated and compelled to pay tribute. He then went on to make war against the Visigoths, partly because they were oppressing the Gallo-Roman Catholics.

It is said that on his way southward, as he drew near a church, he heard the priests chant, "Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me." This, he declared, was a sure sign that he would win a great victory. Going on, he was careful to pay his respects to the shrine of St. Martin at Tours, and was rewarded for his devotion by being guided at

night by a mysterious light which shone from the church tower, and by seeing a doe cross a river with her young, just when he was vainly looking for a ford for his army.

Clovis met the Visigoths near Poitiers (pwä-tyā′), in 507, and there slew their king and won a glorious victory. He then marched on to their capital, Toulouse, and from thence his army went to attack Provence. There, for the first and only time in his life, Clovis's soldiers were defeated; so he gave up all hope of taking Provence, and returned to Tours, where he was greatly pleased to receive messengers from the Emperor of the East.

The last Emperor of the West had been deposed in 476, and the Eastern Emperor had thus become the highest ruler of all civilized Europe, though he had little real power in the West. He now sent Clovis a purple cloak and appointed him Consul. This title, of which Clovis was very proud, helped him to keep the allegiance of the Gallo-Roman population. He was now master of the greater part of Gaul, and he rounded out his dominions on the north by killing several of his relatives, chiefs of other Frankish tribes, and getting himself elected king in their stead.

Clovis made Paris the capital of his great realm. There he died and was buried in 511, after a reign of thirty years.

XIV. CLOTAIRE AND HIS RELATIVES

CLOVIS left his vast dominions to his four sons, who became kings of Metz, Orleans, Soissons, and Paris. Besides these estates north of the river Loire, each of

these four rulers also owned several rich cities in the newly conquered province of Aquitania, whence they drew fine incomes. But Burgundy no longer paid tribute.

Clovis's sons were all cruel and grasping, like their father, so each strove to increase his own kingdom and wealth at the expense of his neighbors and brothers. One of the greatest wars they undertook was waged against Burgundy — the land of the upper Rhone valley.

Clo'domir, king of Orleans, took the lead in this war, captured one Burgundian king, and cast him with his family into a deep well. Then Clodomir set out in pursuit of the other king, but was himself drawn into an ambush and slain. His brothers soon afterwards made peace with the Burgundians, who again paid tribute, and only ten years later (534) became entirely subject to the Franks, after forming a separate nation for about one hundred and twenty years.

Clodomir left three young sons; they were tenderly cared for by their grandmother Clotilda, who hoped to see them rule one day over their father's estates. But Chil'debert, king of Paris, grew so jealous of these children that he summoned his brother Clotaire' to consult with him how to rob these nephews of their inheritance.

The two wicked uncles finally dispatched a messenger to Queen Clotilda, asking her to send the children to them, so that they might set them upon their father's throne. Clotilda, delighted with the prospect of seeing her little grandsons kings, dressed them up in their finest clothes, and after giving them a parting feast, joyfully sent them to their uncles. But the three little boys — the eldest was only ten years of age — had no sooner reached their uncle's

palace, than they were torn from their attendants and locked up to await their doom.

Clotilda was indulging in happy daydreams about her grandchildren, when a warrior suddenly appeared before her, carrying a naked sword in one hand, and a pair of scissors in the other. He roughly said: "Thy sons, our lords, great and glorious queen, are waiting until thou sendest them word how thy grandsons shall be treated. Order them to live with shorn heads, or to be put to death."

The Frankish kings and princes were proud of their long hair, and to cut it off meant that they were unfit to reign and had to become monks. Knowing this, the queen cried out in her grief, "Oh! if they are not to be raised to the throne, I would rather see them dead than disgraced!"

The messenger hastened back to tell the kings. Both uncles then went into the room where two of the princes were imprisoned, and Clotaire, roughly seizing them one after another, put them to death with his own hands! But when the uncles sought their third nephew, to kill him also, they discovered that one of his attendants had helped him to escape through a narrow window, and had borne him away to a place of safety.

For fear lest the wicked uncles should murder him too, this child (Clodoald) was taken to Italy, where he was brought up secretly in a monastery. But when he had grown up, he expressed a wish to become a monk, and cut off his long hair with his own hand. He died in a monastery near Paris, which from him received the name of (St. Clodoald, or) St. Cloud (săn cloo′). A small town grew up where this old monastery once stood; and the

beautiful park near it was for many years the favorite resort of several of the kings and queens whose history you are about to hear, but is now only a playground for many happy French children.

The wicked uncles divided their nephews' estates, and four years later Clotaire set out with his elder brother Theod'eric to conquer part of Germany. During this expedition, Theoderic once invited Clotaire to his room, intending to have him killed; but Clotaire happened to see the feet of the murderers sticking out from under the curtain behind which they were hiding, and therefore, instead of laying aside his weapons, he called his guards. Theoderic then pretended that he had called his brother in only to make him a present of a fine silver dish. Clotaire haughtily accepted the gift and bore it off, but Theoderic, regretting its loss, soon sent his son to ask that it might be returned to him!

The sons of Clovis also waged war against the Visigoths, from whom they won Provence. By 540 they had become so powerful, that the Emperor Justin'ian ceded to them all the Roman rights in Gaul, and allowed them henceforth to coin money, whereon their own heads replaced those of the Roman Emperors.

The lands of Theoderic descended to his son and grandson, and then fell into the hands of Clotaire, who also inherited Childebert's lands in 558, and thus became sole king over more land than was owned by Clovis.

Clotaire was as grasping and selfish as he was cruel, so he now fancied that he would be happy, for he had no rivals left. Still, before settling down, he wished to punish one of his sons, who had revolted a short time before, and therefore pursued him with an army. Clotaire overtook the

fugitive prince in Brittany, just as he was about to sail for England, and ordered his men to tie the unhappy man, his wife, and several small children, to the beams of a cottage, which was then set on fire.

This is the last of Clotaire's crimes recorded in history, for we are told that he lived only one year after committing this awful deed. During that time he was continually haunted by the memory of the son whom he had slain. Night and day he seemed to see the flames and to hear the cries of his victims. On his death bed he exclaimed, "Oh! how great must be the King of Heaven, if he can thus kill so mighty a monarch as I!"

The Frankish kingdom, after being divided for forty-eight years, had been under the rule of a single king for three. It was now divided again among four princes, Clotaire's sons, but as one of them died six years later (567), the whole country was then formed into the three famous kingdoms of Austra'sia, or Northeastern France, Neus'tria, or Western France, and Burgundy.[1]

XV. TWO RIVAL QUEENS

YOU have heard the story of the reigns of the first Merovingian kings in some detail, and therefore have a fair idea of the times in which they lived, and of the way in which these early rulers behaved. But it would be weary work to read as minute a history of all the kings of this race, whose names and dates you can find at the end of this book if you care to look them up.

[1] These names may be seen on the map on p. 69.

Only a few interesting events happened in France during the next two centuries, by the end of which the Merovingians had ceased forever to occupy the throne. During that time the first kings were brave, and their successors were in turn cruel, revengeful, sly, and cowardly, each ruler sinking a little lower than the one who came before him.

Brunhilda.

Not many years after the death of Clotaire I., a deadly rivalry arose between his sons' wives, Brunhil′da and Fredegon′da. The former was a handsome, strong-minded Visigoth princess, who married Sig′ebert, king of Austrasia, shortly before her gentle sister was given as wife to his brother Chil′peric, king of Neustria. The Neustrian monarch, however, soon grew tired of his meek wife, and she was strangled in her sleep by his order, so that he could marry her handmaiden, Fredegonda, one of the most wicked as well as most beautiful women in history.

In those days, some people who called themselves Christians yet believed it a sacred duty to avenge every injury received. Brunhilda no sooner heard of her sister's death than she urged her husband to attack his brother.

After a few years of warfare, Sigebert managed to gain possession of Paris, and was elected king of the Neustrian Franks. He was about to pursue his deposed brother,

when he was stabbed by some murderers bribed by Fredegonda.

Brunhilda's husband being thus slain, she fell into Fredegonda's hands, and suffered great hardships before she managed to get back to Austrasia. There, and later in Burgundy also, Brunhilda became regent for her son, her grandsons, and her great-grandsons in turn, all of whom proved little more than puppets in her hands.

There is something fine and strong about Brunhilda. She was a wise woman, and made many improvements in the country, where an ancient road still bears her name; but her desire to avenge her sister's death and to harm Fredegonda kept her people in a constant state of warfare and turmoil.

Each year the hatred between the two queens became more bitter, and when Fredegonda, after murdering her stepsons and husband, became regent of Neustria for her infant son, the feud was worse than ever. During those years, when neither queen stopped at anything, Fredegonda generally managed to get the better of the quarrel. And when, after a long time, she found that she would die before she had wreaked all her hatred upon Brunhilda, she charged her son, Clotaire II., to carry out her wicked plans.

This king, having by treachery finally secured Brunhilda and her four great-grandsons, had two of these princes slain on the spot, shut the other two up in monasteries after shearing off their royal locks, and then proceeded to torture poor Brunhilda.

Although an old woman by this time, Brunhilda, the daughter, wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother of kings, was by his order mounted upon a camel,

— like the meanest of criminals — and led through the camp, where the soldiers were encouraged to pelt her with mud, and to insult her in every possible way. After three days of torture and shameful treatment, she was finally tied, hair, hand, and foot, to the tail of a wild horse, which dashed through briers and over stones, until she was torn to pieces!

XVI. GOOD KING DAGOBERT AND HIS SUCCESSORS

BY the murder and robbery of his young kinsmen, Clotaire II. became master of all three kingdoms, and therefore, like his namesake, sole king of France. He is noted in history not only for his cruelty to Brunhilda, but also because he was forced to make a new law, whereby the nobles were henceforth allowed to leave their lands and titles to their children. Before that, when a nobleman had died, his lands had always been given back to the king. At this time, also, there was chosen in each of the three kingdoms a chief officer, called Mayor of the Palace, to govern under the king.

While Clotaire was noted for his hardness of heart, his son Dag'obert is so famous for his good nature and jollity that no one in France ever mentions him except as "the good king Dagobert." At his father's death (628), he too found himself sole king of France, and during his reign he received, besides, tribute from many tribes in Germany. He made many wise laws, listened to the complaints of the poor as patiently as to those of the rich, and dealt out justice to all alike.

Many of Dagobert's wise deeds are said to have been due to the good advice given by his treasurer (Éloi), a man of such fine principles that he was called "saint" even during his lifetime. This treasurer was also a very clever goldsmith, and made for the king a golden throne, and a crown and scepter, long carefully preserved in the treasury of the Church of St. Denis, near Paris.

The Present Church of St. Denis.

This church — a wonder of architecture — stands on the very spot where St. Denis is said to have been buried. The story runs that a poor little chapel, built over the saint's grave, had fallen into ruins and was quite forsaken. One day, while pursuing a deer, Dagobert saw it plunge into a thicket, and soon found that it had taken refuge in this tumble-down place. The tender-hearted king not only spared the poor deer's life, but vowed to build a church and abbey there. For this reason he is considered the founder of the abbey of St. Denis, although very little of the building he erected there still exists.

The church finished, we are told that Dagobert laid upon the altar a quaint banner of crimson and gold, cut in the shape of a flame, which is known as the "Or'iflamme." This was the sacred royal banner of France. For centuries no French king ever went to war without first visiting the Church of St. Denis, where the abbot gave him this standard, which was kept on the altar in times of peace. The Oriflamme was always carried before the king in battle, and it waved from his tent in camp, while the royal war cry of "Montjoie et St. Denis" (môN-zhwä' ā săN dē-nee') was heard in every fray where it was carried.

Dagobert felt such an interest in the church he had founded, that he begged to be buried in it. His tomb in the Church of St. Denis — which was several times reconstructed in later centuries — can still be seen, with quaint sculptures all around it, showing how saints and demons are said to have fought for the king's soul, which, we are happy to say, was finally carried off in triumph to heaven. From the time of Dagobert's burial in this church (638) until the end of the eighteenth century, French monarchs were always laid to rest in this edifice, which contains so many beautiful and interesting tombs that thousands of strangers — as well as countless patriotic Frenchmen — go to visit it every year.

Dagobert is considered the best and wisest of all the Merovingian kings, and his memory is still kept green in France by an old nursery rhyme, which is as familiar to children there as the Mother Goose ditties are to you. As most of his successors were weak, idle, and stupid, they are known as the Sluggard, or Do-nothing, Kings. They ate, drank, and were merry; rode about in royal style,

lolling lazily in great wagons drawn by slow-pacing oxen; and troubled themselves about nothing in the world save their own pleasure. As a rule they died very young, the result of too much eating and drinking, and not enough exercise; but none of them were ever missed.

These slothful kings were mere figureheads. The real power in the kingdom had fallen into the hands of their principal officers, the mayors of the palace, who ruled Neustria, Austrasia, and Burgundy about as they pleased. But as these mayors of the palace were often jealous of one another, and anxious to govern all France alone, their rivalry led to many bitter quarrels and even to open warfare.

Finally a famous Austrasian mayor of the palace, named Pep'in (of Héristal), defeated the Neustrians in a great battle (Testry, 687), and thus became sole master of all northern France. It suited him, however, to keep puppet-kings on the throne, whom he crowned or deposed just as his fancy prompted.

For many years after this, mayors of the palace made and unmade kings, getting rid of those who were inconvenient by means of poison or of the dagger, or by cutting off their long hair and shutting them up in monasteries.

XVII. THE SARACENS CHECKED

WHEN Pepin died, his son Charles cleverly escaped from the prison in which his stepmother was vainly trying to keep him so that her son might be mayor of the palace in his stead. Charles then placed himself

at the head of an army, conquered the rebellious German tribes, and had barely put state affairs in some order when he heard that a new danger was threatening France. This was the coming of the Sar'acens, an Eastern nation, who wished to force every one to give up the Christian religion and to adopt that taught by their prophet, Mohammed.

Instead of merely preaching to people, and thus trying to persuade them to do as they wished, the Saracens set out from Arabia to convert the world, sword in hand. As they were very brave, they soon conquered all the northern part of Africa; then, crossing the Strait of Gibraltar, they swept all over Spain, and even ravaged Provence, robbing houses and churches, and killing and burning wherever they went.

Now they had sworn to conquer all France, and had begun by defeating the Duke of Aquitania. The Church of St. Martin at Tours (toor) being one of the oldest and richest in the country, Charles felt sure that the Saracens would soon come to sack that. He therefore crossed the Loire River with a large army, determined to check their advance and protect the shrine.

The two forces met between the cities of Tours and Poitiers, so the battle fought there (732) is sometimes called by one name and sometimes by the other. Both armies were so large and so strong, it is said, that they stood opposite each other seven days before daring to begin the famous battle which was to decide the fate of France and of all Europe.

Throughout this encounter, Charles fought with such courage, and struck such mighty blows, that he earned the nickname of "Martel'," or "The Hammer." We are even

told that Charles Martel killed the king of the Saracens with his own hand and that his example inspired his men to wonderful deeds of valor.

At dark, both armies retreated into their camps to rest, fully expecting to renew the struggle on the morrow. But when the Saracens found out how many thousands of men they had already lost, they decided to slip away quietly during the night, leaving their booty behind them and taking with them nothing but their arms and horses.

When morning dawned, Charles and his men waited in vain for the enemy to come out of their tents and renew the fight. Finally the Franks advanced with great care, for they feared a trick on the part of the Saracens. But they were amazed to find the camp empty, with untold treasures scattered all over the ground, and it is said that they collected in a few minutes more wealth than they could carry away!

The Saracens were so discouraged by this terrible defeat that they gave up all hope of conquering France.

XVIII. THE END OF THE MEROVINGIANS

CHARLES MARTEL, having conquered such dreaded enemies as the Saracens, was the most powerful man in the country, and he exercised the royal power unhindered until his death in 741. He made kings at will, but the Merovingian princes were so weak and useless that for five years he actually left the throne vacant and ruled alone. When he died, the realm was divided between his two sons; but they were allies, and before long one of

them entered a monastery to do penance for his sins, leaving the other — whose name was Pepin, like his famous grandfather — to rule alone. This Pepin, son of Charles the Hammer, was so small of stature that he is known in history as Pepin the Short (*le Bref*), but he was nevertheless very strong, brave, and ambitious. It seemed to him so ridiculous to set one idiotic Merovingian prince after another upon the throne that he decided it would be better to become king himself.

In those days, the clergy (priests and monks) were the only learned people in the land, and at their head was the Pope at Rome. Pepin, therefore, wishing to make sure that none of the clergy would oppose him, sent two men to the Pope to ask who should be king, the man who wore the crown or the man who ruled the people? The Pope sent back word, "That it were better that he should be king who really exercised the royal power."

Pepin was sure now of the approval of the priests and monks, and he had secured the good will of the nobles also by his wise and able government. But we are told that the Austrasians — who admired nothing so much as strength and courage — were rather inclined to look down upon him simply because he was so small. One day, it is said, when he and many of his followers were at the circus, watching a fierce fight between a lion and a wild bull, he suddenly asked who would dare to spring down into the pit, and go and rescue the bull, which was getting the worst in the fray. None of the warriors present stirred, so Pepin boldly jumped down into the arena, drew his sword, and with one strong, swift blow struck off the head of the raging lion. Then turning to the spectators,

who were applauding him madly, he exclaimed, "There, am I not worthy to be your king?"

The people evidently thought he was, for soon after, when assembled at Soissons, they raised him on a shield, thus proclaiming him king over all the Franks. This was in 752. The hair of the last "do-nothing king" was cut off, and the rule of the Merovingians ended, after having lasted a little more than three centuries. The new royal family, descended from the Pepins, was to be known as the Carolin'gians (or Carlovin'gians), because its greatest men were Charles the Hammer and Charles the Great, and the Latin name for Charles is Car'olus.

Pepin was so anxious that every one should consider him a lawful king, that he was actually crowned twice, the second ceremony being performed at Rheims, by the Pope himself.

This Pope had come to France to ask Pepin to fight the Lom'bards in Italy, with whom he had quarreled. Pepin, who had already won many victories over the Saxons, and compelled them to pay tribute and to receive the missionaries kindly, now led a large army southward. He defeated the Lombards and made them give up a tract of land in Italy near Raven'na. This land was bestowed upon the Holy See, — as the bishopric of Rome is called, — so for the next thousand years the Pope was head of a state, as well as head of the Church. He is therefore said to have had temporal as well as spiritual power.

Not satisfied with all these triumphs, Pepin next conquered southern France, and before he died his kingdom included nearly all the space between the Elbe and the Pyrenees, the ocean and the Alps.

Pepin was a good ruler as well as a brave general, and every year he carefully presided over the assembly, which was now held in May. It was different from the old Field of March, because the clergy were present as well as the warriors, and while the latter still decided all matters of war, the former gave the king good advice concerning the government of the country.

XIX. CHARLEMAGNE'S WARS

IN dying, Pepin divided his kingdom between his two sons, who would probably have quarreled very sorely had not their mother kept peace between them three years, until 771, when only one of them was left. Although the dead prince had left children, the nobles thought it would be best to have one ruler only, so they elected Charles to be sole king.

He is one of the few really great men of the world, and as he ruled over a large part of western Europe, he is claimed by both the French and the Germans as their greatest king. Although a German by birth and language, Charles — who was later surnamed the Great (in Latin *Magnus*) — is best known by his French name of Charlemagne (shär'le-mān), by which we may call him now, to avoid confusing him with his famous grandfather, Charles the Hammer.

During his reign, — which lasted forty-three years, — Charlemagne waged war on all sides, taking part in fifty-three campaigns, more than thirty of which were directed against the Saxons and other German tribes. These bar-

barians, although severely punished by Pepin for harming the missionaries, had kept on torturing and killing those who tried to convert them, and had burned down their schools and churches. To punish them for these and other misdeeds Charlemagne often crossed the Rhine with an

Charlemagne's Empire.

army, and even built a wooden bridge across this river so as to get over it more easily. So much blood was shed in these wars that it is often said that Saxon blood dyed the soil, which really has a peculiar reddish hue because of the minerals in it.

In the course of these wars, Charlemagne tore down the favorite Saxon idol (Irminsul), forced many warriors

to receive baptism, carried off many families to live in different parts of France, and worked so hard that he finally became master of all Germany, which rapidly became civilized.

In 773 the Pope asked Charlemagne to come into Italy to punish the Lombards, who were again making trouble. Charlemagne, therefore, collected a large army and, dividing it into two columns, sent one over the St. Bernard′ Mountain, while he himself led the other over Mont Cenis (môn sẽ-nee′).

In this way he attacked the Lombards from two sides at once, and soon became master of all except two of their cities, which made an obstinate resistance, but had to yield at last. Having conquered the Lombards, — who had ruled northern Italy for about two hundred years, — Charlemagne put on the iron crown their kings had worn, and declared that he would henceforth rule Lom′bardy as well as France.

As Charlemagne was such a mighty warrior, and knew how to march great armies from one end of the country to the other with unusual speed, he was called to Spain, in 778, to fight the Saracens, his grandfather's old enemies. Several later campaigns were directed there also, and when they ended, Charlemagne was master of northern Spain, from the Pyrenees to the Ebro.

During one of these campaigns, Charlemagne lost his nephew Ro′land, and as this young man is the hero of many songs and tales, you will like, in the rest of this chapter, to hear what is said about him, although very little of it is really true. The stories say that Roland was leading the rear guard of the army on the homeward march,

and that he had solemnly promised his uncle to call for help by blowing his horn, should the enemy dare to attack him. As the soldiers were winding their way along one of the narrow passes of the mountains, where the rocks rose straight up for hundreds of feet, some Saracens, hidden on the heights, rolled down great masses of earth and rocks and huge tree trunks to crush the men below.

In vain Roland bared his sword and tried to scale the heights; he could not reach the foe! The dead lay thick around him when he suddenly remembered his promise and loudly blew his horn. Then, resuming his efforts, he fought the hosts which now poured down on all sides, until all his companions were slain. Feeling that his end, too, was near, Roland blew a second blast on his horn ("Oliphant")—a blast so loud and so long that he actually burst the veins in his temples! Then, wishing to save his good horse from falling into the hands of the enemy, who might illtreat him, Roland bade the faithful beast good-by and killed him with his own hand.

To prevent the foe from seizing his sword ("Durendal"), which he knew would soon drop from his lifeless hand, Roland tried to break it by striking with all his might at the rocks near by. But the strong blade cut right through the stone, and Roland had to break it, at last, by bending it sharply over his knee. Then, falling back exhausted, the hero had barely time to whisper a prayer before he passed away, calling to the Archangel St. Michael to receive his parting spirit and bear it safely to heaven.

Meantime, his uncle, twenty miles away, fancied he heard the sound of Roland's horn; but a traitor, who knew what was happening, declared that it was merely the

call of a hunter. Still, when Roland blew that last loud blast, Charlemagne came hurrying back, only to find his nephew and all his men dead, and many of them buried beneath masses of fallen stones! Charlemagne wept bitterly over the death of his beloved Roland, and duly avenged him by punishing the Saracens.

Roland was long considered the best and bravest knight of his time, and for more than two hundred years French soldiers loved to hear and sing "The Song of Roland." In the mountains, people still show a great cleft in the rocks, which they say was made by Roland's sword, and there is a queer echo which is supposed to be the lingering sound of the last blast of this hero's wonderful horn.[1]

XX. CHARLEMAGNE'S MANNER OF LIFE

ALTHOUGH Charlemagne was a great warrior, and fought many battles, he was also very fond of study and books. He therefore invited learned men to come and live at his court, and got them to teach him and his subjects all they knew. There were two schools in his palace, one for grown people and one for the children, and Charlemagne himself is said to have studied diligently.

Thus he learned to speak Latin and Greek, read many old books, collected the poems of his time, and compared different copies of the same book so as to see that they were quite correct. In those days, you must know, books

[1] Guerber's *Legends of the Middle Ages*, pp. 129–151; *Legends of the Rhine*, pp. 93–94, 123–127.

were not printed as they are now; each book was simply a manuscript — was literally written out by hand. Charlemagne was also very fond of music, and during his reign the first organ was introduced into France, where, we are told, a woman actually died of joy the first time she heard it played. Charlemagne liked church singing, made the priests use the Gregorian chants, and it is even said that he composed a hymn himself, which is still used whenever a man is ordained or made a priest.

Like most men of his time, Charlemagne handled the sword with far greater ease than the pen, but he was so desirous to learn to write well, that he always kept waxen tablets and a stylus under his pillow or in his bosom, so that he could practice writing whenever he had a spare moment or was too wakeful to sleep.

Many amusing stories are told of Charlemagne and of his studies.[1] Once, for instance, when he found fault with Al'cuin — the most learned man of his time — for making a mistake, this teacher gently said: "The horse, which has four legs, often stumbles; how much more man, who has but one tongue!"

This same learned man established many schools, which Charlemagne visited from time to time to examine the pupils. We are told that on such occasions he used to place the good scholars at his right hand, and the bad ones at his left, telling them that God would judge them in the same way on the Last Day, and reward good but punish evil.

Once, when the king noticed that the children of the com-

[1] *Legends of the Rhine*, pp. 78, 81, 87, 88, 90, 93, 123, 194, 244, 247, 263, 328. *Legends of Switzerland*, pp. 248, 270.

mon people worked much harder and made far better progress than those of the rich, he spoke angrily to the lazy ones, saying: "Because you are rich, and are sons of the principal men in my kingdom, you think your birth and your wealth sufficient for you, and that you stand in no need of these studies which would do you so much honor. You think only of dress, play, and pleasure; but I swear to you I attach no importance to your riches, or to this nobility which brings you so much consideration, and if you do not quickly regain by assiduous study the time you have lost in frivolities, never, no, never, will you obtain anything from Charles!"

Charlemagne was so anxious to make the best of his time, that he had some one read aloud to him even while he dined. Although a king, he ate nothing but plain, wholesome food, and seldom drank anything but water. His dress, also, was very simple, and made of strong materials which could stand sun and rain, while his courtiers often wore silks and satins.

One day, after they had been trying to persuade him to don rich garments also, Charlemagne suddenly rose from the table and proposed that they should all go hunting without delaying to make any change in their apparel. Then he led his courtiers through brush and bogs until their fine clothes were all torn and muddy, and did not pause when a sudden shower came on, drenching all to the skin.

On reaching home once more, Charlemagne gave orders that all should appear at court on the morrow, wearing the same clothes; and many of his elegant courtiers presented a very sorry figure on the next day! Charlemagne, after

gazing at them a moment in silence, burst out laughing, and cried: "How you do look! Your fine clothes are all ruined. Now just see my garments, they are none the worse for the wetting we had!" It was in this way that he proved to them that plain attire is always best for an active life.

Charlemagne was also very fond of bathing, especially in the hot springs at Aix-la-Chapelle (shȧ-pĕl′), where he often invited a hundred of his soldiers to bathe with him, astonishing them all by his feats in swimming. Near these springs he finally built his favorite palace, adorned with rich marbles brought from Italy, and in the same town he erected a beautiful cathedral, where he was buried. Another reason for establishing his capital at Aix-la-Chapelle was his desire to keep the near-by Saxon tribes in order, for every time he was called away to the opposite side of his kingdom by war or business, they were likely to rise in rebellion.

To keep track of all that was going on in his vast kingdom, and to make sure that all his subjects should obtain justice, Charlemagne divided the country into districts, over which certain counts and dukes held sway. Then, too, he regularly sent out messengers two by two, to visit every part of his kingdom, listen to all complaints, and come and report to him all they had seen and heard. Thus, if any of his officers proved cruel or unjust, he was sure to hear of it sooner or later, and could punish them.

Besides, every year Charlemagne held two great assemblies out in the open air. Any one who wished to speak to him, but was afraid to enter the palace, could then approach him freely, and make known his request or

complaint. These assemblies also made his laws, which were divided into sixty-five chapters, and called "Cap'-itularies."

Charlemagne attended to little things just as carefully as he did to more weighty matters, and even examined the books of his farmers, making them sell all the eggs he could not use, and keep strict account of every penny received or expended. He was always industrious, spending little time in pleasure, and thinking always of his people's welfare. He not only built a bridge across the Rhine, — as we have seen, — but also began a canal which was to join the Rhine and Danube, a piece of work which was finished only recently.

He built roads, established markets in various cities, made the people use the same measures and weights, and encouraged them to be industrious and thrifty. It is also said that Charlemagne's foot became the standard of length for the whole country, and that the width of his thumb — a space just one twelfth the length of his foot — was used as an inch. In France, the latter measure is therefore still called a thumb (*pouce*), and nearly everywhere people still measure by the foot, although many of those who use this measure daily have never heard that it is ascribed to this king.

XXI. CHARLEMAGNE, EMPEROR

AFTER the wars in Saxony, in Lombardy, and in Spain were ended, Charlemagne went over into what is now called Austria, to fight the A'vars, from whom

he also won much territory and spoil. Then as he had become master of nearly all the land which had once formed the Western Empire, it was thought only right that he, too, should bear the title of Emperor.

When he went to Rome, therefore, in 800, he received his name of Charles the Great, and on Christmas Day

Painting by Lévy.

The Coronation of Charlemagne.

appeared in church clad in imperial purple. While he was kneeling before the altar, the Pope took the imperial crown, and placing it upon Charlemagne's head, hailed him sixty-eighth Emperor of Rome.

Thus the Western Roman Empire, which had died out 324 years before (in 476), sprang to life again under Charlemagne; but from this time on it is generally known as the "Holy Roman Empire." During that visit, Charle-

magne also confirmed the grant of land which had been made to the Church by his father.

The last years of Charlemagne's reign were far more peaceful than the first; still, he foresaw that there would be trouble as soon as he died. According to one story, while he was gazing out at sea, he once suddenly beheld some ships of the Northmen — bold northern pirates who, sailing along the European coasts of the Atlantic Ocean, often landed, stole all they could lay hands upon, and then sailed away leaving nothing but ruins behind them. Tears coursed down his aged cheeks, and when his followers asked the cause of his grief, he sadly answered: "Do you know, my faithful liegemen, why I weep? I do not fear that these men can hurt *us*, but it affronts me to think that while I live, they have dared to insult my coasts, and I foresee with grief what evil they will do to my descendants and to their subjects!" You will soon see that Charlemagne had good cause to weep over the misfortunes which were to come, and that his descendants did suffer greatly at the hands of these Northmen.

Charlemagne was married five or six times. He had fourteen children whom he loved dearly, but some of them died before he did. While his sons were often called away to fight or attend to business, his daughters generally accompanied him wherever he went. It was even said that he was too fond of them to allow them to marry, for he feared their husbands might want to live away from court, and thus separate him from them. If you would like to know the story of the courtship and marriage of one of these daughters, you can read it in Longfellow's charming poem, "Emma and Eginhard" (ā′gin-hart), in the *Tales of*

a Wayside Inn, where you will also find other interesting things about this great monarch.

Charlemagne was so great, so rich, so brave, and so powerful, that his fame spread far beyond Europe, even into Asia. The Caliph of Bagdad, as a token of respect, sent him ambassadors bringing wonderful presents. Many of these Eastern gifts were great curiosities to the French and Germans of that day, who make particular mention of a monkey, an elephant, an organ, and a mechanical clock; but all agree that most precious of all the gifts were the keys of the Holy Sepulcher at Jerusalem.

Charlemagne was tall and strong, had blue eyes, curly hair and beard, and handsome features. While he could occasionally dazzle people by the splendor of his imperial robes, he generally dressed like a soldier, carrying his great sword ("Joyeuse"), which was so very heavy that few warriors could handle it at all.

Charlemagne never believed in doctoring. When he fell ill of fever, he refused to eat, and died at the end of a week, in January, 814, at the age of seventy-two, having made all his last arrangements with great care and calmness.

At his request, he was buried in the vault of the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle. His body was embalmed, clad in imperial purple, seated on a throne, and placed in a tomb all paved with gold coins. With a crown on his head, scepter in his hand, sword by his side, and an open Bible on his knees, the great Emperor sat in state, and the vault was closed. Charlemagne had prescribed all this in his will, and had besides given strict orders that his tomb

should never be opened, under penalty of his curse. But one of the German Emperors, wishing to secure the regalia (crown, scepter, and other royal or imperial ornaments), had the tomb opened in 997. The body of Charlemagne was then found just as it had been left. The ornaments and gold were removed, the corpse laid in a tomb, and the throne brought up into the gallery of the cathedral, where it can still be seen. But, strange to relate, the Emperor who braved Charlemagne's curse was never lucky again. As for the regalia, it was taken in time to Vienna, where it is still exhibited in the imperial treasury.

Cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle.

The hero of countless interesting French and German legends, Charlemagne, the most picturesque and powerful monarch in Europe for several centuries, was greatly regretted when he died. We are told that a monk of his time wrote: "No one can tell the mourning and sorrow that his death caused everywhere; even pagans wept for him as for the father of the world!"

XXII. FEUDALISM

CHARLEMAGNE had foreseen that the different nations over which he ruled were never likely to unite so as to form one single people. He followed the old Frankish custom, and planned a division of his realm among his three sons; and several years before his death he set them up as kings, under himself, in what we now call France, Italy, and Germany. But two of these princes dying before him, the third, Louis, became Charlemagne's sole heir.

Louis was so gentle and devout that he early earned the surname of the Meek, or Pious (*le Débonnaire*), and had he been allowed to do as he pleased, he would doubtless have entered a monastery and spent all his life there in prayer and study. But the peace he so dearly loved was not to fall to his lot, for even when very young he was compelled to take part in his father's many wars.

On coming to the throne at the age of thirty-six, Louis I. declared that he meant to have a quiet and orderly court, with none of the license or splendor which had distinguished that of Charlemagne. But the nobles, who were great fighters, did not appreciate a quiet life, and a court where religious services took up the greater part of the day soon proved very irksome to pleasure-loving people. Besides, the Emperor felt little sympathy for their tastes or pursuits, and in his horror for everything pagan, even ordered the destruction of all the old Frankish and Saxon poetry, which his father had so painstakingly collected.

Temperate both in meat and drink, the only pastime Louis ever permitted was the hunt, so it was no wonder

that his dull court was soon deserted by the nobles, who preferred to live in their own way at home. They were further encouraged in their disregard of the Emperor's wishes by the disobedience of his own sons, who no sooner attained manhood than they openly defied him, a mode of conduct in which they persisted as long as he lived, as you will see.

Charles Martel and his successors divided much of the land in France among a few great warriors who were to keep their estates as long as they lived, and in exchange for this gift of land were to maintain men ready to fight on horseback for their king whenever called upon to do so. These lords were therefore said to do homage to the king for their lands, and were called the vassals of their royal suzerain, or master. Each of these lords, in turn, bestowed farms and villages upon his warriors, also in exchange for help in time of war. So these warriors were known as the vassals or servants of their suzerain, the lord. These warrior vassals also gave away part of their holdings to lesser folk for services of one kind or another.

In this way, little by little, there was established in France a society built on promises, or on faith, and called feudalism. In the feudal society the king came first, then the great overlords, next the warrior vassals, and then the serfs, or farmer and peasant class, who cultivated the soil and gave part of their harvests to the fighting men in exchange for their protection. These serfs were almost slaves, but they could be sold only with the land they tilled.

The lowest class of all comprised the common or household slaves, — mostly prisoners of war, — but as these could

purchase their freedom, and as it was often given to them as reward for some service, this class gradually became less and less numerous, until it finally died out entirely in France.

The great warrior lords of France were at first nearly all of the conquering Frankish race, while the former inhabitants were reduced to the middle or lower classes, composed of merchants, artisans, and serfs.

Now, conquered people always feel somewhat resentful, and they are apt to hate their conquerors, which is the principal reason why the Frankish lords and their subjects often failed to agree. But as the lord was made the judge and ruler of the people on his land, the lower classes had to learn submission, and little by little they ceased to struggle or murmur openly.

To protect themselves from the enemy, or from any neighbor who might try to take their new lands away from them, these Frankish lords soon built fortresses, where not only they and their families, but all their dependents, could find refuge in time of need. Such fortresses, or castles, many of which still exist, were often built on mountains or near rivers. To make it impossible for an enemy to enter, they were surrounded first by wide moats — ditches filled with water — and then by high and very thick walls made of great blocks of hewn stone.

The outer wall generally had but one opening, or gateway, with a tower above it, or turrets on either side. This gate was provided with a drawbridge, which could be lowered or raised as the owner of the castle wished. It also had a strong iron grating, sliding up and down in deep grooves, which was dropped at the least hint of

danger, and great doors heavily studded with iron. Guards were posted here and there along the wall and in the turrets near the gate, to keep constant watch over the surrounding country, and to give the alarm if any enemy drew near.

Part of Feudal Castle at Vitré.

Inside the outer wall, and built against it, were many buildings, opening into the castle yard. These were the granaries, stables, barracks, and servant quarters of the castle.

In the center of the inclosure, which sometimes included several rings of walls, one inside of another, there generally stood the donjon, or keep, a huge tower which was the dwelling of the lord and his family, and the place where the chief treasures were kept. The ground floor of this dwelling was often very dark, because, for safety's sake, few openings were made in the lower part of the wall, so it was generally used as a guard room.

In the cellars, or vaults, underneath were the dungeons, or prison cells. Captives were often chained to the walls of these cold, dark, damp places until they died.

Over the guard room were the great hall and the living rooms of the lord and his family, which were far brighter and pleasanter than any of the others within the inclosure. Winding stairs, cut in the thick stone walls, led up to the bedrooms above, and finally to a terrace on top of the tower, whence one could behold all the surrounding country, and enjoy in safety sun and air and extended view.

Such were the homes which the nobles constructed when Louis's court grew dull for them. There each lord held a little court of his own, until in time one and all longed to become their own masters, and ended by flatly refusing to obey the king or emperor.

XXIII. TROUBLESOME SONS

AS we have seen, Emperor Louis had no desire to reign, so he soon decided to divide his empire into kingdoms for his three sons, Lothair', Pepin, and Louis (or Ludwig). King Louis had the eastern part, Pepin the western, and Lothair the central strip, including Italy. Emperor Louis's nephew Bernard, who was already king of Italy, soon declared war against his uncle, but was deserted by his army at the last moment, and fell into the Emperor's hands. While Louis himself would readily have forgiven this nephew, the judges decreed that Bernard deserved death for his treachery, and to satisfy them, as

well as his second wife, Judith, Louis consented at last that his nephew's eyes should be put out.

Although Louis had really intended to spare Bernard's life, the poor prince died from his injuries. Louis felt such deep remorse for his share in this death, that he knew no peace until he had done severe public penance for it (822). On this occasion the priests scourged the Emperor, and showed him to the people, dressed in sackcloth, with ashes on his head, as a sign of mourning and great humiliation.

Judith next persuaded Louis to take back some of the lands he had granted to his three eldest sons, so as to make a fourth share for her boy, Charles. As you can readily understand, Louis's three grown-up sons were very indignant when asked to give up their lands so that their baby step-brother might have a larger kingdom than any of theirs. One of these princes, in his anger, even joined the rebellious Bretons and a few restive nobles, who hated Judith on account of her haughty manners. Poor peace loving Louis, thus forced to go to war, was soon defeated; but although his rebel son compelled him to lay aside his crown, the two others helped him to regain it, after wringing from him a solemn promise that he would never again try to deprive them of their lands.

In spite of this agreement, Judith soon persuaded Louis to call an assembly, which again divided the realm so as to allot a large share to Charles. The eldest sons, hearing of this, now joined forces and marched against their father, whose army they met near the Rhine, on a plain known as the Red Field, because the soil there was red (833). While the two armies were thus face to face, the

priests and most of Louis's soldiers were induced to desert him. The poor Emperor was therefore obliged to come into his sons' camp, with his wife and youngest child, and humbly beg their mercy. Because Louis's sons triumphed here by means of treachery, this place has since been known as the "Field of Lies."

These princes deposed the poor Emperor and shut him up in a monastery. Within a few years, however, the people turned again to their old Emperor, and replaced Louis on his throne. All the sorrows and humiliations he had undergone could not, however, make him either firm or wise; and the nobles did not scruple to show their scorn for a king who forgave every offense so readily, and showed so little fighting spirit.

When Pepin died (in 838), it is said that Louis called Lothair and Charles, pointed to a map of the lands that had been claimed by these three sons, and said to Lothair: "Here, my son, is the whole realm before your eyes; divide it, and Charles shall choose his portion; or let us divide it, and you can choose."

Whether this story is true or not, the fact remains that Lothair kept the central part of the empire, including Italy, while Charles took the western part for his share. King Louis was allowed to keep his former share, the eastern part of the empire; but he was dissatisfied, and declared war against his father.

Emperor Louis was on his way to subdue this rebellious son, when he was taken ill and died on an island in the Rhine, saying sadly, "I forgive my son, Louis, but let him remember that he caused his father's death, and that God always punishes disobedient children!"

XXIV. THE STRASSBURG OATH

LOUIS died in 840, having reigned twenty-six years, most of which were spent in warring against his sons. During this time, the nobles took advantage of the disturbed state of the realm to seize all the land, wealth, and power they could, for each man thought of himself only, and not of the Emperor or country.

When Louis died, his youngest son, Charles I., the Bald, ruled over most of what we now call France; Louis (Ludwig) over much of Germany; and Lothair — who bore the title of Emperor — had, besides Italy, a long, narrow strip of land running from the North Sea to the Alps, which included a great part of what is now known as Belgium and Switzerland. This realm was called Lothair's land, or Lotharin'gia, a name still borne by a small part of it, the province of Lorraine'.

As already stated, King Louis was not satisfied with his share, and as he and Charles both refused to recognize Emperor Lothair as their master, war soon broke out. The three armies met at Fontenay (fôNt-nĕ'), where was fought the "Battle of the Brothers," as it is often called (841). So many Frankish warriors lost their lives in this encounter that it is said no middle-class Franks were left, and none but lords of that race were to be found thereafter in France.

Lothair was beaten and had to retreat, but the war continued. Charles and Louis met at Strassburg, where, in the presence of their respective armies, they took a solemn oath to be true to each other. On this occasion Charles, the French king, spoke to his brother's soldiers in German,

while Louis, the German monarch, addressed Charles's men in French. The "Strassburg Oath," taken in 842, was duly written down, and is now the oldest specimen of ancient French and German, for it was framed in the days

Partition of Verdun (843).

when those two languages were just beginning to take shape.[1]

Lothair, seeing plainly that he would not be strong enough to resist the combined forces of his two brothers, now signed a treaty with them at Verdun (843), whereby

[1] Ogg's *Source Book of Mediæval History*, p. 153.

he retained his share of land, and the title of Emperor, but had no authority whatever over his brothers, each of whom was allowed to govern his realm as he chose. This treaty is considered very important in European history, because it marks the epoch when Germany, France, and Italy parted company, never to be really one again for any length of time.

Charles I. now ruled over the land extending from the Pyrenees and the Ocean, to the Meuse and the Rhone. Here, as you know, Celts, Romans, Franks, Burgundians, and Goths had settled in turn, so that the French nation and language were made up of a mixture of all these different elements.

Unfortunately, the ruler of this rich land was as weak — although not as good — as his poor father. He never had to war against his sons, it is true, but he had to resist the nobles, who tried in every way to deprive him of his power. He was also greatly troubled by the Saracens, and especially by the Northmen, or Normans, those terrible pirates whom Charlemagne had seen, and of whom he had predicted that they would make endless trouble for France and for his descendants.

By this time the Normans — who had not dared to land in France in Charlemagne's day — had grown so bold that they not only made yearly raids all along the coasts, but actually sailed up the principal rivers and even besieged and sacked strong towns like Rouen (roo-äN′) and Paris.

As Charles was not a fighter himself, he bade one of his nobles, Robert the Strong, defend the country, and in reward for his services made him Count of Paris. Robert, who was as brave as a lion, fought the Normans until he

fell in battle (866); then the weak Charles bribed the bold invaders to go away.

Although the Normans left France, it was only to return before long to secure more money. This time, before he could induce the nobles to join him in driving them away, Charles had to make an edict, wherein he promised that the estates and offices of his vassals should not only be theirs as long as they lived, but should belong to their heirs after them. It was thus that Charles the Bald established hereditary nobility in France, where it has lasted until to-day.

XXV. THE NORMANS BESIEGE PARIS

ALTHOUGH weak and indolent, Charles was so anxious to bear the title of Emperor that he hastened to Rome as soon as Lothair's son died, to be crowned there by the Pope. He also claimed his brother Louis's kingdom of Germany; but while he was thus trying to increase his realm north and south, the Normans were constantly invading it from the west. Charles was on his way home from Italy to try to oppose them, when he died in the Alps, leaving France to his son Louis II., "the Stammerer."

Louis II. had a short and uneventful reign of less than two years. Like his father, he made great concessions to the nobles, an example followed also by his sons and successors, Louis III. and Car'loman, who ruled in peace together, but died early, after showing much more spirit than either father or grandfather.

During this time, the Normans were growing more and more troublesome, and they laid some parts of the land so completely waste that wolves roamed unhindered through ruined and deserted villages and towns. In fact, in those days, no one felt safe unless sheltered behind the strong walls of some great fortress. Such were the ravages of the Normans that the last-mentioned kings tried to buy them off by giving them a thousand pounds of gold a year. But when these two young monarchs died, leaving no heirs, the crown of France was given to their uncle, Charles II., the Fat, who already ruled over Germany and Italy. This uncle was as weak and cowardly as he was stout, so he proved a very bad ruler. Besides, he had already given the Normans a province in Holland, so these pirates, knowing he was not to be feared, sailed boldly up the Seine River and laid siege to Paris (885).

King Charles remained inactive, but Eudes (ēd), Count of Paris (a son of Robert the Strong), and the bishop, defended the city so bravely that they kept the foe at bay for about a year and a half. During that time the people suffered horribly from famine and disease; but, encouraged by Eudes and the bishop, they nevertheless strengthened the walls, fought like heroes, and made up their minds to die rather than surrender.

The Norman chief, Rol'lo, who led the attack, was such a giant that no horse could carry him. He was, therefore, always obliged to go afoot, which won for him the surname of "Ganger" (gäng'er), or "Walker." He found the city — which had been thrice before besieged by the Normans — so well fortified this time that, in spite of his good generalship, he could not manage to take it.

The Parisians, who then occupied only an island in the river (La Cité), had barred both branches of the stream, so that even the seven hundred Norman vessels could not go farther inland, as they had first intended. The Normans, exasperated by these obstacles, made many attempts to scale the walls, but the Parisians hurled stones upon the assailants, poured streams of boiling oil and pitch down upon them, and even women and children are said to have fought on the walls most fiercely.

Throughout this siege, Eudes kept up the people's courage, and once cut his way out of the city, through the close ranks of the enemy, to urge the king to come to the rescue of his besieged subjects. Lazy Charles made many promises, but Eudes, seeing that help was not speedily forthcoming, returned to the city at the risk of his life, to cheer the inhabitants by his presence and share their hardships and labors.

At the end of many months, Charles the Fat finally appeared on the heights near Paris with a huge army; but, instead of attacking the Normans, he began to parley with them, and then weakly signed a new treaty, bribing them to pass on and rob Burgundy, but leave Paris in peace.

The Parisians, angry and ashamed, refused to ratify this treaty or to let the Normans pass, so the invaders had to carry their boats across country, and launch them farther upstream, beyond the obstructions placed to check their advance.

On this occasion, you see, "The King of France and ten thousand men," as the nursery rhyme has it, "pulled out their swords and put them back again." But the French, who admire bravery above everything, indignantly refused

to obey such a cowardly ruler any longer, and in 887 deposed Charles, electing Eudes to rule in his stead.

XXVI. THE LAST OF THE CAROLINGIANS

AS the new king was not of the Carolingian race, many of the lords seized this pretext to refuse him obedience, and the country split up into several small parties, until there were as many as six crowned kings in France at once!

The best and bravest of all these monarchs was Eudes, who went on fighting against the Normans, over whom he won two great victories. But he had to oppose them almost single-handed, for the peasants were afraid to venture out of the fortresses, even to till the land, and the nobles, jealous of Eudes's power, would not obey him. Many of them selected a king of their own, Charles III., the Simple (a brother of Louis III. and Carloman), to rule France, and began a civil war to set him on the throne. First one party, then the other, had the advantage in this conflict, until finally Eudes died and Charles was left to rule alone.

All the early part of Charles the Simple's reign was troubled by Norman raids, and in 911, hoping to end them once for all, this king made a famous treaty with Rollo, promising him a large province on the coast, and his daughter's hand in marriage, if the Norman chief would only become a Christian, do homage to the French king for his lands, maintain order in his own territory, and defend the rest of France against the raids of his fellow-Normans.

Rollo agreed to all this, but he was still so much of a barbarian that his rude manners greatly shocked the French courtiers. When told to do homage, for instance, by kneeling before the king, placing his hands in his master's while he took the oath, and then kissing the royal foot, he flatly refused. After some discussion, it was arranged that one of his men should go through this part of the ceremony in his stead. But the soldier who thus acted as Rollo's substitute, or proxy, raised the king's foot so suddenly to his lips that the poor monarch actually lost his balance and fell over backwards!

The province which Charles thus abandoned to the Normans was henceforth to be called Nor'mandy, or Land of the Normans, a name which it still bears. Rollo soon established such good order throughout all this state that it is said his golden bracelets hung three years on the branch of a tree by the roadside without any one daring to lay as much as a finger upon them.

It is thus that the Normans, who first appeared off the coast of France as pirates in 799, won a lasting foothold there in 911. They became so strong and so civilized that about a century and a half later (in 1066) they crossed the Channel with a mighty army to conquer England.[1]

For ten years following the gift of Normandy to Rollo, such government as there was in France was carried on wholly by the king's favorites. During this time, weak Charles either gave his lands away, or allowed them to be taken from him, until he had nothing left except one town (Laon), which had been his capital.

[1] See *Story of the English*, pp. 73–82.

The nobles, exasperated by his weakness and laziness, finally deposed him in 922, and as Eudes had died, leaving no children, they now offered the crown to his brother, Robert, Count of Paris. This newly elected king had not much time granted him to show what he could do, for he was soon killed in battle, but his son-in-law, Rodolph, succeeded him as king, and to prevent Charles from making any further vain attempts to regain the crown, clapped him into prison, where he kept him the rest of his life.

Charles's wife and son had, meantime, taken refuge in England, and when Rodolph died, his brother-in-law, Hugh the Great—the most powerful nobleman in the realm—invited them to come back. The young Carolingian prince, who is known as Louis IV. (*d'Outre-mer*, or "From Beyond the Seas"), was now crowned by Hugh's order. But of course Hugh fully expected to exercise the royal power in his name, and when he found the young king very independent, they quarreled hotly, and even came to open warfare.

Louis IV. proved most unlucky during his reign of eighteen years, and when he died, still young, his son and grandson, Lothair and Louis V., became puppet kings in turn. At Hugh's death, in 956, all the real power passed into the hands of his son Hugh, called Capet (cā′pet, or cȧ-pĕ′), which means the "wearer of a hood," or a "long-headed" man. Very brave and capable, too, this Hugh ruled for a time, while Carolingians had the name of king; but when at last Louis V. secretly made an alliance with the Germans, the indignant nobles assembled, and after setting aside the Carolingian race forever, offered the crown to the most powerful nobleman in France (987).

It is thus that Hugh Capet became founder of the third dynasty of kings. He was crowned at Rheims, where six noblemen and six bishops, called the king's peers or equals, were granted special honors and privileges. Hugh Capet, being Count of Paris, continued to dwell in that city, which was ever after to be the capital of the kingdom. For the first time the country, hitherto known by different names, can now really be called France, although for convenience' sake we have already used that term.

XXVII. THE YEAR ONE THOUSAND

THE Merovingians and Carolingians had occupied the throne during more than five centuries, and the scepter had now passed into the hands of the third, or Ca-pe'tian race, which was to supply all the other *kings* who afterward ruled in France.

The new ruler had, at first, very little power, and was master merely of his own duchy, which included only about one twentieth of what we now call France. Besides humoring his twelve peers, Hugh tried to keep on good terms with some hundred and fifty petty noblemen, who had the right to coin money and were practically kings, their castles being their capitals.

In those days such lords made war against one another without consulting the king, and sometimes even annexed lands and assumed titles. One nobleman having done this, Hugh haughtily inquired, "Who made you count?" But the nobleman, in nowise daunted, pertly retorted, "Well, who made you king?"

In fact, Hugh was so little a king at first that he dared not even punish such insolence as this, but was obliged to overlook it, and go on as best he could. He felt far from secure on the throne, and to make sure his son Robert would eventually succeed him, he had the young man crowned during his own lifetime.

No great progress was made in France under Hugh Capet. Not only were the nobles turbulent, but many people were already uneasy at the thought that the end of the world was drawing near. You must know that there were some people in those days who said that in the year 1000 the Last Judgment would take place; for it was thus that they interpreted a passage in the Bible.

Many people, thinking they would soon have no further use for their money, houses, and lands, now gave all they had to the Church, or distributed their goods among the poor; for they believed that such gifts would help to secure the forgiveness of sins they might have committed. Some farmers thought it useless to sow grain as usual in the fall, or to plant crops of any kind, since they could not expect to gather the harvest. As the weather happened to be very bad just then, every storm was viewed as a new and sure sign that the end of the world was near at hand.

But the year 1000 came, and nothing happened! Day after day people expected the Judgment, which did not come. Then they fancied that perchance an error had been made in reckoning the exact time of Christ's birth, and two or three years passed thus in uncertainty. As they still continued to exist, they now imagined that the end of the world would come 1000 years after Christ's death,

instead of after His birth, and as Christ lived some thirty-three years, this view kept people uneasy a long time.

All through the beginning of the eleventh century, therefore, few improvements were made in the country, and at times many people merely lived from day to day, in hourly expectation of the end. As there were many little wars in this period also, the result was great poverty and several terrible famines.

Then, as always happens, after the famines came plagues; for idle, dirty, ill-fed people are much more likely to catch and spread diseases than those who work hard, keep clean, and are properly fed. In fact, so many people died of the plague that whole towns and villages were deserted, and wolves roamed through the empty streets and houses, vainly seeking something to eat.

XXVIII. ROBERT'S TWO WIVES

ROBERT I., who came to the throne four years before the new century began, was a gentle and very pious man, who would have made an excellent monk, for he loved to attend services, sing hymns, and compose church music.

Because he felt such respect for the Church, he was greatly troubled when the Pope bade him send away his wife. You must know that a general law of the Church forbids marriages between cousins, and it happened that Robert and his wife Bertha were closely related. Robert, loving his wife dearly, refused at first to obey the Pope's command, so priests were sent to excommunicate him,

that is to say, to forbid him to enter any church, and to tell him that he and his wife were accursed, because they were committing what the Church considered a deadly sin.

The priests first read the Pope's message to the royal couple, and then turning over a lighted torch, or taper,

Painting by Laurens.

Excommunication of Robert.

which they had brought, they quenched its light, solemnly crying: "May you be accursed, may you be banished with Cain the fratricide, with the traitor Judas, with Da'than and Abi'ram, who entered hell, and may your joy be extinguished at the aspect of the Holy angels as this light is extinguished before your eyes!" [1]

This curse pronounced, the priests filed slowly out, leav-

[1] See *Story of the Chosen People*, pp. 20, 78.

ing the king and queen alone with these awful words still ringing in their ears! After this ceremony, all churches were closed wherever the royal couple happened to be, few people consented to obey or serve them, and the very dishes from which they ate had to be purified by fire before any one else would touch them.

Robert tried at first to be brave and not mind this excommunication. But when it became clear that this firmness was bringing misfortune upon the people intrusted to his care, both he and his wife — who was a good woman — perceived that they would have to yield to the Pope's authority. Bertha therefore sadly withdrew to a convent, where she spent the rest of her life as a nun, and the Pope forgave Robert and allowed the churches to be reopened.

Before long, yielding to his people's entreaties, the king married a second time, taking Constance, a haughty young noblewoman, to wife. This queen brought many new fashions to court, and as she was fond of dress, display, and amusement, effected many changes in the pious king's outward life. Instead of a monk-like robe, he now wore long mantles trimmed with gold fringe, and his weapons were adorned with silver trappings. But at heart Robert was quite unchanged. One day, having given away all his money to the poor, he led a beggar into his private room, where, with the latter's aid, he removed the silver ornaments from his lance. Then giving them to the poor man, he bade him be off, with the warning, "Do not let Constance see you!"

When the French king was at his meals, beggars were always admitted by his order to eat the crumbs which fell from the royal table. A poor man, sitting at the king's

feet, once slyly cut off a piece of gold fringe at the bottom of his garment, whereupon the king bent down and softly whispered: "There, my man, that is enough for thee; leave a little for the next beggar, who may need it even more than thou."

The king was so fond of church music that he often composed hymns, some of which still exist. The new queen, who greatly admired music of a lighter sort, often begged her husband to write songs for her. She was therefore greatly delighted one day when, glancing at some music he had just written, she caught sight of the Latin words, "O Constantia Martyrum." You see, she knew so little of Latin that she fancied she saw her own name, and thought that the song was all about her, whereas it referred to the constancy of the martyrs!

Besides the plagues, famines, and all the woes connected with the dread of the world's end, Robert suffered many troubles from his barons and his family. The Normans helped his wife and son when they once rose up and made war against him. It was also during his reign that some of the Normans, who were always thirsting for adventure, went southward and gained a foothold in Italy.

Poor Robert's troubles ended only with his death (1031), but as he had wisely followed his father's example, and had crowned his son, Henry I., during his lifetime, no serious resistance was made to this prince's coming to the throne. In fact, the only persons who raised any objection were the new king's mother and younger brother; but Henry satisfied their claims by giving his brother the duchy of Burgundy, which his father had recently acquired.

XXIX. THE WEALTH OF THE CLERGY

NOT only were the last years of Hugh Capet's reign and all of Robert's overshadowed by fears that the world would soon come to an end, but the beginning of Henry I.'s reign was also troubled in the same way, as it was now about one thousand years since the Passion of our Lord. Once more the fields were left untilled, in daily expectation of immediate judgment, and for about three years, from Greece to England, little work was done. Consequently, people suffered greatly from famine and plague. While the rich could draw upon reserve resources, the poor suffered so intensely that some actually turned cannibals, while others ate roots, grass, and even lumps of clay.

The time having passed again without bringing about the expected change, people finally took courage once more, and began again to plant and sow. With work, plenty was restored, but many of the French were very much poorer, for, while dreading the coming judgment, they had given away all they owned to the Church, which could now boast of being far richer than the king or any of his nobles.

Not only was much of the land and wealth thus held by the clergy, but most of the knowledge — and hence most of the power — centered in them also. Each monastery was at this time a sort of school or university, where a number of the most intelligent monks were carefully educated to be the teachers, preachers, and learned men of the day. Such men as were found capable of receiving the necessary instruction were trained to be scribes, and in each monastery a room called scriba'rium was set aside, where, day after day, monks painstakingly copied the books they owned,

or such as they could borrow. Thus in a few years each monastery collected a little library of its own, and, however small, these collections of manuscripts were justly considered precious, for in those days a single book was often worth more than a whole farm.

It was at this time also that a beginning was made in building many great cathedrals. The monks invested part of their wealth in erecting beautiful churches, which they adorned with statues, paintings, and exquisite stained-glass windows, often the work of some of their number. Many great churches took several hundred years to finish, and some of them show, in different parts, varying styles of architecture. The heavy Roman style, with round arches, came first, and was followed by the Gothic style, with pointed arches.

The most learned man of the tenth century was the French monk Gerbert (zhâr-bâr′), who is noted as the inventor of a clock. He also introduced into Europe the Arabic numbers, which made arithmetical operations easy. Because he was wiser than most of the men of his time, he was accused of practicing magic, but he succeeded, nevertheless, in winning so much respect that he was chosen to occupy the papal chair under the name of Sylvester II. He was the first Frenchman ever elected Pope.

Throughout the thirty years' reign of King Henry I., he had many troubles with his barons, who had become so accustomed to do as they pleased that they were continually at war with one another. Whenever the barons fought, their vassals were either obliged to follow them, or to take refuge within the castle walls and leave their fields untilled. But the many little wars waged in all parts of

France at this epoch so sorely hindered the cultivation of the soil that food became very scarce.

No less than twoscore famines having occurred in about fifty years, the priests, wishing to put an end to the trouble, suggested an arrangement whereby no fighting should be allowed throughout Lent or Advent, or any feast day, or from Wednesday evening to Monday morning of any week.

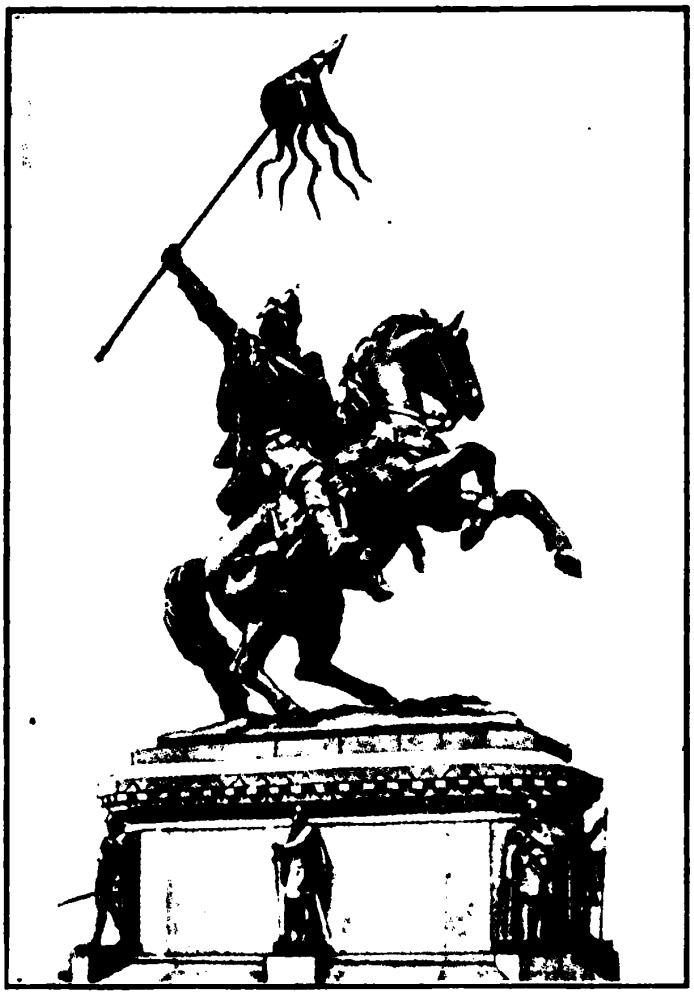
This was called the "Truce of God," and the barons having agreed to keep it, it was decided that any man who failed to respect it should be fined or banished. As only eighty fighting days a year were left by this arrangement, the peasants were able to make use of the remainder to cultivate the fields without dread of being either killed or captured.

But the noblemen, who indulged in no occupation save warfare and hunting, were so greatly bored by their enforced idleness that many of the most turbulent left home in search of adventure, while others joined in any war which happened to be going on at the time. It was thus that many of the Normans went to fight in southern Italy and Sicily, where they established a kingdom which was to last a long time.

Some nobles, in repentance for their sins, made pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Of all King Henry's many powerful vassals, the most important was the Duke of Normandy, called "Robert the Magnificent" by the nobles, and "Robert the Devil" by the poor. Wishing to atone for his many sins, — which included several murders, — this Robert decided to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulcher. He died while on his way home, and was succeeded by his son William (the Conqueror).

Henry I. left his kingdom to his son Philip I. (1060), who was crowned when only seven years old. A few years later Duke William prepared to take possession of the English crown, and began by asking Philip to join in the expedition. Philip having refused, William ever after insisted that he owed no homage to the French king for the land he won on the other side of the Channel (1066).[1]

Philip I., seeing that his vassal, after this conquest, was far more powerful than himself, became violently jealous, and soon vented some of his spite by saying sarcastically, one day, that William was far too fat to move. But William proceeded to prove the French king was greatly mistaken by declaring war against him and threatening to drive him out of his capital, Paris.



Statue of William the Conqueror, at Falaise.

William was in a fair way to succeed in executing this threat, when his horse stepped on some hot ashes at the siege of Mantes (mänt), and threw the rider so violently against the pommel of the saddle that he died shortly after from the effects of the injury. William was

[1] See *Story of the English*, pp. 73–84.

buried in Normandy, and his inheritance was divided among his sons, one of whom received the duchy of Normandy and did homage to the French king, while the sovereign of England remained entirely independent.

XXX. THE FIRST CRUSADE

WHILE people were living in constant dread of the end of the world, and feared for their salvation, they had undertaken many pilgrimages. Most of the pilgrims set out to visit the Holy Sepulcher, which was then in the keeping of the Saracens. These people, although not Christians themselves, had been moderately kind to pilgrims, but when the Holy Land fell into the hands of the Turks, poor Christians were subjected to great hardships. The story of their sufferings, of the lack of respect shown by the Turks for the holy places, and of the robbery and murder frequently committed upon pilgrim bands, little by little roused a storm of indignation in Europe.

In each castle it was customary to set aside a room, known as the "Pilgrims' Room," for the use of all holy travelers. Wanderers on their way to and from the Holy Land, were entertained everywhere free of charge; but in return for food and lodging they generally amused the owner of the castle and his family with thrilling tales of their adventures. Such tales were also sometimes told by traveling bards, or singers, who were called "trouvères" (troo-vâr′) in the north of France, and "troubadours"

(troo′bȧ-doorz) in the south. In these ways the conditions at Jerusalem became well known in most parts of France.

In 1094, one of the returning pilgrims, Peter the Hermit, obtained from Pope Urban II. (a Frenchman) permission to preach a holy war against the Turks, and to urge the noblemen to arm speedily and march to Pal′estine to rescue the tomb of our Lord from the hands of unbelievers.

Painting by Archer.

Peter the Hermit preaching the Crusade.

A great assembly was therefore held at Cler′mont, whither the clergy and nobility were invited, and where the Pope and Peter the Hermit eloquently described the sufferings of the Christians, and urged the barons to enlist in a holy war. Such was the effect of this eloquence that most of the knights present then and there donned a red cross, to show that they would fight for the Lord; and, as the

Latin word for cross is *crux*, this pious undertaking became known as a crusade. Not only did the clergy and nobility enlist in this war, but the poor and helpless, thinking they were as good in the sight of the Lord as the rich and strong, joined in it also.

Two great expeditions therefore soon set out from France. The first was composed mainly of poor men, women, and children, led by monks and by an adventurer known as Walter the Penniless. This band followed the usual pilgrim route, through Europe to Constantinople, begging its way, and stealing and murdering whenever a good opportunity offered. When this rabble reached Constantinople, the Eastern Emperor, not wishing to support them, and finding them far too disorderly to be desirable guests, sent them hurriedly across the Bos′phorus to Asia, where they were soon attacked and annihilated by the Turks.

A second band, — the real expedition, — composed of fighting men only, and led by Godfrey of Bouillon (boo-yôn′), made a much more successful journey, and having reached Asia, besieged Antioch (ăn′tĭ-ŏk), which was taken after eight months.

In 1099, five years after the first crusade had been preached, the crusaders came in sight of Jerusalem, where they fought so bravely that the city fell into their hands. A Christian "Kingdom of Jerusalem" was now founded, with Godfrey at its head, but he firmly refused the title of king, saying he would not wear a golden crown on the spot where his Redeemer had worn a crown of thorns, and preferred to be called "Defender of the Holy Sepulcher."

Although more than five hundred thousand persons set out on this crusade, less than five thousand returned, nearly

all the rest having perished, either from sickness or at the hands of the Turks. A small number of crusaders, left to defend the new conquest, formed two famous societies, which are known as the "Knights Templar" and the "Knights Hos'pitalers." The former undertook to guard the Holy Sepulcher and the places made sacred by the life and death of our Lord, while the latter established inns where pilgrims could be lodged and cared for on their way to and from Jerusalem, and served as their armed escort in time of need.

Thus the first crusade — and the only one which was wholly successful — was mainly the work of Frenchmen. The kingdom of Jerusalem, which they established, lasted for eighty-eight years. It was because the first crusaders came from France that Europeans were dubbed Franks by the Turks, a name they still bear in the East.

The first crusade was followed by many others, which caused great changes in France. During many years not only were all the principal fighting men absent, — thus leaving none but peaceful folk at home, — but many of the noblemen, in order to procure funds for the expedition, either mortgaged or sold their lands, or allowed their vassals to purchase their freedom.

The king, who stayed at home and took no part in the crusade, found it comparatively easy to govern old men, women, and children, who were not likely either to resist his authority or to quarrel among themselves, so he could consider himself really head of the realm for the first time. He also took advantage of the times to extend his estates.

Then, too, many cities, having purchased the right to govern themselves during their lords' absence, now obtained

from the king charters of rights which established their freedom. The very first charter granted to a "commune," or city, in France is said to have been given (to the city of Le Mans) the same year that William conquered England (1066).

During the first crusade many similar charters were granted. All these free cities soon erected city halls, where the burghers assembled, and tall belfries where hung the bells that rang out the alarm (*tocsin*) in time of danger or fire. These bells also rang for "curfew," — the daily signal for putting out the lights and banking the fires, — and thus helped to maintain order and safety.

Most of the free cities, like the castles, were surrounded by high walls, pierced by gateways flanked with towers, where watchmen were posted night and day, to notify the authorities of the approach of an enemy or of the outbreak of any fire or other disturbance.

XXXI. A LOVE STORY

PHILIP I. was succeeded in 1108 by his son Louis VI., who bore at different times the surnames of "the Fighter," "the Wide-awake," and "the Fat." During his twenty-nine years' reign he made many efforts to suppress the brigand lords intrenched in their castles, gave his protection to the weak against the strong, and greatly encouraged the forming of communes. In fact, he favored the latter so openly that he is often called "the Father of Communes."

Besides fighting his nobles, he also had to make war against Henry I. of England, who made good his claim to Normandy. During one battle in this war (Brenneville, 1119), Louis's horse happened to be seized by an enemy, who cried out in triumph, "The king is taken!" But Louis promptly retorted, "Do you not know enough chess to be aware that a king cannot be taken!" Saying these words, he raised his weapon and felled his would-be captor, thus promptly freeing himself.

This battle is memorable chiefly because of the small number of slain. Although the fighting lasted many hours, it is said that only three knights fell. This is accounted for by the fact that none but noblemen took part in the fray, and that they were all so well protected by their armor that it was almost impossible to kill them. In such battles, horses, too, were covered with heavy armor, and trained to run against the foe with such force that knights were often unhorsed before they had a chance to strike a blow. A knight thrown thus upon his back could seldom rise again without aid, so squires and attendants were always expected to hasten to their master's rescue whenever such an accident befell him.

The King of England, angry because the French tried to take Normandy, now urged the Emperor of Germany to invade France. Louis, hearing of this, called the communes and nobles to his aid, and going to St. Denis, took the oriflamme. These warlike preparations proved enough to frighten the Germans, who gave up all hope of doing anything, and signed a treaty (1124).

It was also during the reign of Louis VI. that a young man named Abélard (à-bā-lär′) won a great reputation in

the Paris schools. His eloquence was such that many students came to listen to him, and his learning so remarkable that he was engaged as private tutor for the beautiful Héloïse (ā-lō-ēz′), niece of one of the church dignitaries.

While teaching this young lady, — who was as talented as he, — Abélard fell in love with her, and persuaded her to elope with him. This caused much scandal, and the young people being soon overtaken, were separated, placed in religious houses, and ordered never to think of each other again.

In spite of these commands, they managed to see each other and to exchange frequent letters, some of which nave been preserved, and are considered fine specimens of French literature. After many, many trials, these lovers died, and were finally buried in the same tomb, which can now be seen in a cemetery (Le Père La Chaise) in Paris, and which is often visited by strangers as well as by Frenchmen. There you frequently see fresh flowers strewn over the stone figures of the recumbent lovers, for many people have been touched by the tale of their unhappy love affair.

XXXII. THE SECOND CRUSADE

LOUIS VI. placed the lilies (*fleurs de lis*) — emblems of purity of faith — on his coat of arms, and ever since his day, *kings* of France always used that flower as their distinctive symbol. He was very ambitious, and made many efforts to extend his power and increase his realm. He planned a marriage between his son and heir, Louis,

and El′eanor of Aquitaine (ak-wĭ-tān′), the heiress of vast estates in southern France. Although the king died suddenly before this marriage could take place, his son, Louis VII., "the Younger," dutifully carried out his wishes by marrying this lady.

With his own and his wife's estates, Louis VII. was richer and more influential than any French king of his race before him. He was brave, but not always wise, and his reign was troubled by wars against England and many difficulties with his barons. In one of these contests he rashly set fire to a large town, where thirteen hundred poor people had taken refuge in a church and perished in the flames. Thereupon, full of remorse, and wishing to do penance, he made a vow that he would go on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Just about this time the Turks had been successful at last in their efforts to reconquer some of the places taken from them by the Christians in the first crusade. Stories of their successes and of their cruelty roused great indignation among all Christian people, so Pope Eugene III. sent St. Bernard — a monk famous for his piety, learning, and visions — to preach the second crusade.

Like Peter the Hermit, St. Bernard preached to such good purpose that most of his hearers enlisted in the holy war. Among these were the King and Queen of France, and when Bernard went to Germany he induced the Emperor and his court to take the cross also. Thus, you see, the second crusade was not under French leaders only.

The Germans started first, encountered great hardships, and most of their forces were destroyed. The French were more fortunate; yet they were often in great danger,

and on one occasion the king had to cling to a tree on the edge of a precipice with one hand, and defend himself against a large force of enemies with the other. But, having almost by miracle escaped from this great peril, Louis VII. pressed on, and after making vain attempts to take Damas'cus, returned home, without having fulfilled his avowed purpose of visiting the Holy Sepulcher (1149).

During the king's long absence, his realm had been wisely governed by his former tutor, Suger (sü-zhā'), abbot of St. Denis, a learned, hard-working, and patriotic Frenchman. Seeing that many of the most turbulent nobles soon became discouraged and returned home, this man wrote to the crusading king: "Those who trouble the public peace come home, while you remain abroad. What are you thinking of, my lord, to leave at the mercy of wolves the sheep intrusted to your care?"

It was after the receipt of this warning that Louis abandoned the crusade and returned to France, where he rewarded Suger for his good offices by bestowing upon him the title, "Father of his Country." As long as Suger lived, the king was guided mainly by his counsels, but after his death Louis rashly divorced his wife, Eleanor (1152), who, being an heiress and a spoiled child, had not been an agreeable wife. But in divorcing this lady — by whom he had no children — Louis was obliged to let her take back the estates she had brought as a dowry. These she now bestowed with her hand upon Henry Plantag'enet, who, two years later, became King Henry II. of England.

With his own and his wife's estates, this English monarch owned more land in France than the French king himself (see first map on page 163); still, he was Louis VII.'s

vassal, and was bound to do homage to him for all this property. The English king, however, did not find Eleanor a more comfortable helpmate than did Louis VII.; for later on she encouraged their sons to rebel against him, and was always stirring up some trouble at his court.[1]

XXXIII. MORE CRUSADES

AFTER divorcing this first wife, Louis VII. married again, and to his great joy became father of a son, whom he called Philip, "the Gift of God," or Philip Augustus. This child was crowned as Philip II. during his father's lifetime, and succeeded him before reaching fifteen years of age. Although so young, he showed great skill and tact, made a treaty with his nobles when they rebelled against him, suppressed all law-breakers, and — like most of the good Christians of his day — persecuted the Jews with great cruelty. He also extended his lands by marrying a descendant of Charlemagne, Isabella of Hainault (ĕ-nō′), who brought him vast estates as part of her dowry.

Philip Augustus also upheld Eleanor and Henry II.'s sons in their rebellion against their father. One of these princes, Richard, — later known as the Lion-hearted, — was a great friend of his. After some time they two induced Henry to meet them under an elm on the frontier, and sign a treaty.

Here it was also arranged that, instead of continuing to fight against each other, the two nations should combine forces to undertake a new crusade. This plan was made

[1] See *Story of the English*, pp. 96–105.

because news had just been received that the King of Jerusalem had been taken prisoner, and that the Holy City had been obliged to surrender to Sal'adin, a leader of the Turks and Saracens noted for great valor.

When the tidings came that the Holy Sepulcher was again in the hands of the infidels, great excitement prevailed everywhere, and it was soon decided that all those who could not, for any reason, take part in the expedition, should contribute one tenth of their wealth to help defray the expenses of the third crusade. This tax is known as "Saladin's Tithe," because it was raised to fight this Saracen ruler and his forces.

Philip, King of France, and Richard — who was now King of England — started by sea for the Holy Land. They were obliged, however, to winter in Sicily, where, having nothing else to do, they began a quarrel, which was to grow more and more bitter in time. From there, Philip hurried directly to the siege of A'cre, while Richard stopped on the way to take possession of the island of Cyprus.

The two kings had expected a large German force to join them in Palestine, but the Emperor, Frederick Barbaros'sa, was drowned on the way, and his army was nearly exterminated, so that only a small band of Germans met Philip and Richard at Acre. There, during the two-years' siege which followed, many quarrels arose among the crusaders, who were very jealous of one another.

The city having finally been taken, Philip Augustus announced that he must return home; but before he left he made a solemn promise not to attack any of Richard's lands while the latter was absent from England. Richard therefore remained in the Holy Land, doing such feats of

arms that his name became a terror to the foe. Still, in spite of his heroic efforts, he did not succeed in retaking Jerusalem, and had to content himself with making a treaty by which Saladin agreed to leave the maritime cities in the hands of the Christians, and to allow pilgrims to visit the holy shrines without molestation.

Richard now set out for home, too, but was shipwrecked on the way, and fell into the hands of the Duke of Austria, who sold him to his enemy, the Emperor of Germany, by whom he was kept in prison for fourteen months. The story of his captivity, of his rescue by his minstrel, and of his return home, is told in English history. It was during Richard's absence that his brother, John Lackland, made an attempt to take possession of England, being aided in this treachery by Philip Augustus. So when news finally came that Richard was ransomed and coming home, Philip wrote immediately to John Lackland, saying, "Take care of yourself, for the devil is unchained!"

Having returned home and made friends with his false brother, Richard proceeded to avenge himself for Philip's treachery by making war against him. For the next five years, therefore, there was much trouble between the two nations. During this time the French king suffered several defeats, and had several hair-breadth escapes; but Richard was finally killed while besieging a castle in central France (1199).[1]

In 1201 the fourth crusade was preached, but, although noblemen from all parts of Europe took part in it, none of the kings enlisted. The crusaders, having hired ships from Ven'ice, yet not being able to pay for them in coin,

[1] See *Story of the English*, pp. 105–117.

gave, instead, their services to that republic, which was then engaged in war in Dalma′tia. Next, the crusaders went on to Constantinople, which they conquered, and where they founded a Latin empire which was to last about sixty years. The chief historian of this crusade is the entertaining story-teller, Villehardouin (veel-ȧr-dwăn′),

Carcassonne.

whose account of this campaign is one of the French classics.

Seven years after the fourth crusade had been preached, the French began to wage war against some heretics in the south of France — people who professed to be Christians, and yet upheld certain doctrines contrary to the teachings of the Church. As one of their strongholds was Albi (ăl-bee′), they are known as the Albigen′ses, and the crusade against them — which lasted, with intervals, about

thirty-five years — is known as the fifth, or Albigensian crusade. The king himself was too busy at that time to take any part in it, so the war was led by a Norman baron, Simon of Mont'fort, who conducted it with great energy, and was rewarded for his services by the gift of large estates in the south, and the title of Count of Toulouse (too-looz').

In 1209, these crusaders took the town of Béziers (bā-zyā'), where they put to death all the inhabitants. One of the captains, having asked how they were to distinguish between heretics and good Catholics, was cruelly told to kill all, for "the Lord would know which were the sheep and which were the goats!" Carcassonne (car-ca-sōn') soon fell also, and the heretics had to sue for peace.

Simon of Montfort having died (1218) during a renewal of the Albigensian war, his son besought the help of the king, who now granted it; but the southerners did not like their new master, and in the end the estates won by Montfort were given up to the king and added to the crown lands (1229).

XXXIV. THE BATTLE OF BOUVINES

WHEN Richard the Lion-hearted died, his brother, John Lackland, took possession of England and Normandy, although he had no real claim to them, for they belonged by right to his little nephew, Arthur of Brittany. But John, having this child in his power, imprisoned him, and probably put him to death with his own hand,

for the boy disappeared after having last been seen with his heartless uncle.[1]

When Philip of France heard that Arthur was dead, he summoned John, as his vassal the Duke of Normandy, to appear before his peers, to answer for the murder of his nephew. John refused to obey, so Philip confiscated all his estates in France. Thus Normandy, which had been three hundred years in other hands, came back to the crown. But the result of this confiscation was a war, in which John Lackland finally secured as allies the Emperor of Germany and the Count of Flanders, the latter being a rebellious baron who had already defied his master so openly that Philip had sworn, "Either France shall become Flanders, or Flanders, France!"

Philip Augustus, called upon to meet the allied English, Flemish, and German forces just when he was about to invade England, summoned his barons and burghers, and set out for Bouvines (boo-veen′), where a decisive battle was fought (1214). Shortly before the encounter, Philip, who had been hearing mass, placed his crown on an open-air altar, and said to his nobles, "If any one here thinks he can wear this crown more worthily let him step forward and take it." The noblemen, awed by the numbers arrayed against them, were not desirous of assuming such responsibilities at that moment, so they unanimously cried, "We want no other king than you!"

Thus assured of the loyalty of his followers, Philip Augustus began the battle, in which he and the German Emperor fought bravely, and had several horses killed under them. At the end of the day the German Emperor and

[1] See *Story of the English*, pp. 117–118.

John were in full flight, and the Count of Flanders was a prisoner. Philip Augustus returned home in triumph, followed by his prisoner in chains. The rebellious count was then put in an iron cage, to serve as a useful object-lesson for all nobles who attempted to oppose their king!

Because the communes as well as the nobles took part in the battle of Bouvines, it is considered the first great *national* victory. It was celebrated with great rejoicings, the streets being strewn with flowers and the houses all hung with flags and tapestry.

A year after this battle, the English barons wrung from John Lackland the Great Charter (1215), but as he did not keep his promises, they offered the crown of England to a French prince the next year. The heir to the French throne might thus, perchance, have become master of England also, had not John suddenly died, leaving a child (Henry III.) to succeed him. Now the rebellious English barons preferred a child — in whose name they could rule — to any foreign prince, so the Frenchman had to return home without having gained anything by his venture.[1]

XXXV. REGENCY OF BLANCHE OF CASTILE

PHILIP II. AUGUSTUS died in 1223. During his wise reign the crown lands were greatly increased in extent, the capital was surrounded with new ramparts, — fragments of which still exist, — the Louvre (loo'vr') was begun, and work on the cathedral Notre Dame (started under Louis VII., 1163), was concluded.

[1] See *Story of the English*, pp. 117–124.

We are told that the king, standing at his palace window, was one day so offended by the stench arising from the muddy streets that he decreed that they should henceforth be paved. Philip Augustus also built the public markets, and founded the French University, a continuation of the Paris schools made famous by Abélard.

Although a good king, Philip Augustus proved a faithless husband, for he divorced one wife merely for the pleasure of marrying another, a high-handed proceeding for which he was duly punished by being excommunicated. Then, having been forced to take back the discarded wife, he proved so unkind to her that she cannot have regretted him greatly when he died.

Philip's son, Louis VIII., called the Lion, or the Fat, had a brief reign of three years, during which he had to fight the English, and to carry on the war against the Albigenses. He, too, won some territory, so that when he died, of all the lands which the English had once owned in France, they had nothing left but the province of Guienne (ḡee-ĕn′ ; see second map on page 163).

Early in life Louis VIII. had married Blanche of Castile, an unusually intelligent and capable woman. She gave him several children, and when he died she became regent in fact, though not in title, for her eleven-year-old son, Louis IX. The wise queen brought up this prince with the utmost care, and as she was a firm and pious woman, she made a very good man of him. We are informed that she taught him to be charitable, and was in the habit of saying, "Know, my son, though I am devoted to you, and feel all a mother's love for you, I should

prefer to see you dead rather than have you become guilty of any mortal sin."

Besides being good, Blanche was brave; it was said that she had the courage of a man in a woman's heart. The nobles, thinking it a fine chance to rebel, with a child king and a foreign woman at the head of affairs, soon banded together. But Blanche acted with such decision and skill that she managed to detach the Count of Champagne (shăm-pān′) from their ranks, and, having secured him as an ally, got the better of the rest of her foes, with whom she made a treaty.

It was at this time that the war of the Albigenses, begun so long before, was brought to an end, and in this same treaty it was settled that the main part of southern France — now known as the Languedoc (läng-dōc′) — should belong to the king, the remainder coming to the royal house a little later by the marriage of one of the king's brothers with the noblewoman whose dowry it formed. The name of Languedoc (language of *oc*) is due to the fact that the people in southern France then used the word *oc* for "yes." Those in northern France used *oil* (o-eel′), the inhabitants of Germany *ja* (yä), and those of Italy *si* (sē). So, in talking of the various nations in those days, it was customary to speak of the people of *si*, and of those of *ja*, instead of Italians and Germans.

Before ending her regency, Blanche also arranged an advantageous marriage for her son with Margaret of Provence, heiress of that province, and thus secured for the crown another great increase of territory.

The personal rule of Louis IX. begins in 1236, when he came of age, but throughout his life he often con-

sulted his mother, and was always much influenced by her advice. Young as he was, Louis proved a very able king; and although he was noted for his gentleness and piety, he was not lacking in spirit or decision; for when the Emperor of Germany once tried to take advantage of him, he announced very plainly that France was not so weak but that it could resent an insult!

The noblemen having again rebelled, — being upheld this time by the English, — Louis IX. met them in battle (Taillebourg, 1242) and, although the enemy were twenty against one, succeeded in winning a brilliant victory. Then, the Englishmen having retreated, the rebellious Frenchmen fell at the king's feet, humbly begging his pardon, which was immediately granted.

XXXVI. THE SIXTH CRUSADE

IN 1244 Louis fell very ill, and made a vow that if he recovered, he would go to the Holy Land on a pilgrimage and crusade. His mother and counselors vainly tried to dissuade him from undertaking this perilous expedition, which they dreaded on account of his delicate health; but Louis insisted upon taking part in the sixth crusade, and persuaded many of his nobles to join him. Leaving his mother officially regent of the realm during his absence, he sailed from a port in southern France, accompanied by his wife, his brother, and most of his court.

Believing that Jerusalem could best be taken by first conquering Egypt, Louis directed his course thither, and

landed at Dami-et'ta. The Saracens, drawn up on shore and waiting for him, were so amazed at the impetuosity of this king — who sprang overboard and waded ashore to encounter them sooner — that they turned and fled. Their panic enabled the crusaders to secure the city of Damietta, where they found great stores and much plunder.

Painting by Cabanel.

St. Louis at Mansura.

The French army remained here nearly five months without pursuing its advantage, thereby giving the enemy plenty of time to rally and make preparations for defense. Starting out then to capture Cairo, the French were hindered by the overflowing of the Nile, and at the Ford of Mansu'ra (1250) suffered a great defeat. Such was the number of dead that the air became infected, and the army, vainly trying to retreat, was attacked by a plague.

The king himself, weakened by illness, was overtaken

by the enemy, who slew most of his followers and made him prisoner. He now began to bargain with the Saracens for his release, offering a large sum to free his men at arms, and the town of Damietta for his own ransom.

While these negotiations were taking place, Queen Margaret had remained in Damietta, where the news of her husband's defeat and captivity reached her just as she had given birth to a little prince. Fearing lest the enemy might take possession of the city before she was able to leave it, she called an aged knight to her bedside, and bade him keep guard over her, saying, "Sir knight, I request on the oath you have sworn, that, should the Saracens storm this town and take it, you will cut off my head before you will allow them to seize my person." The loyal knight simply answered, "Madam, I had already decided to do so." He kept guard over her so faithfully that no harm came to her.

After recovering his freedom, Louis IX. embarked with the remnant of his army for the maritime cities in the Holy Land, which he now placed in a good state of defense. There he remained four years, doing all he could to protect the Christians in the East, although his mother kept constantly writing, begging him to come home.

During his absence, Queen Blanche had many troubles to contend against. Not only were the noblemen restive, but the peasants, hearing that their beloved king was in danger, took it into their heads to fly to his rescue. Forming what is known as the "Crusade of the Shepherds," they started out without means, and without any knowledge of the difficulties of the journey. Although

Queen Blanche took prompt measures to stop them, she succeeded only after great numbers had perished.

Only the news of Queen Blanche's death could determine Louis to leave Palestine. On his way home his ship ran against a rock, and it seemed for a while as if all on board would perish. The king was urged to leave the vessel with his family, but nobly replied that the lives of the five hundred people with him were as precious in the sight of the Lord as his own, and that if he left, a panic would surely seize the remainder of the passengers, while if he remained everything would be done to save them all. Thanks to his steadfastness, the ship was saved from its perilous position, and all on board were rescued.

During another storm, which threatened to sink the vessel, Queen Margaret, who was as brave as her husband, was asked whether the royal children should be awakened, and answered firmly, "No, let them go to God sleeping." In spite of these and many other perils, the royal family reached home safely, where the king now turned all his attention to governing his kingdom in the wisest way.

XXXVII. THE REIGN OF LOUIS IX.

LOUIS IX. is noted for his love of justice. He abolished trial by combat, and arranged that any person not satisfied with the decree of the superior courts could appeal to him. Some of these cases were tried by this king himself, who often sat under a great oak tree in the forest of Vincennes (vin-sĕnz′), just outside of Paris, so that the poor and humble could approach him without

being intimidated by his officers or by the sight of unwonted splendor. When Louis could not settle the question himself, he referred it to an assembly of lawyers, known as the Parliament, where the evidence was carefully weighed. Louis also decreed that forty days should henceforth elapse between the proclamation and the beginning of any private war.

These laws, and many others which he made, are now known as the "Establishments of St. Louis." He arranged that the royal coin should be received throughout France, while the money minted by his nobles could be used only within the bounds of their estates. As the "king's money" in Louis IX.'s reign was always of the same weight and value, and could be used all over, it was soon preferred to any other, so little by little the nobles ceased to coin any themselves.

Louis is noted for his charity as well as for his justice. He founded several hospitals, and is famous for having built the first asylum for the blind (Quinze-Vingts, 1260), an institution which first afforded shelter to three hundred crusaders who had lost their sight in the Holy Land, where hot sand, glaring light, and lack of sufficient water for bathing often cause blindness.

Louis also encouraged one of his counselors, Robert de Sorbon (dẽ sōr-bôN′), to leave his fortune to found a school for poor students in theology. This institution is still known as the "Sorbonne" (sōr-bŏn′), and is now the center of public instruction in France. Even in the thirteenth century, twenty thousand pupils were educated there, and such learned men as Thomas Aqui′nas, Roger Bacon, and Alber′tus Magnus came there to study. Louis himself

contributed about one thousand volumes for the library of this institution, a gift of great value in those days.

Having purchased the crown of thorns, — the most precious of all Christian relics, — Louis built, near his palace in Paris, a beautiful little shrine, known as the Holy Chapel (Sainte Chapelle), to serve as its place of deposit.

Sainte Chapelle.

During all these years Louis tried to live in peace with his neighbors. He made favorable treaties with Spain (1258) and with the English. In fact, such was his fairness that he insisted upon giving back to the English some lands to which he thought he had no claim. Because he deemed honesty the best policy, he was often chosen umpire in quarrels, not only among his fellow-countrymen, but even by the English barons, when they once got into difficulties with their monarch, Henry III. Louis IX. decided in favor of the English king, but also insisted that this monarch should obey the Great Charter, and thus respect the rights of the barons.

After spending sixteen years at home, devoting all his

energies to the good of his people, Louis decided to go on a second crusade (the eighth, 1270), although by this time his health was so poor that he had to be carried on board the ship. Urged by one of his brothers, Louis directed his forces against Tu'nis, then in the hands of the Turks; but he had no sooner landed, than he fell victim to the plague, which also killed many men in his army. After a very few days' illness, the dying king made his last arrangements, and after directing that he should be laid on a bed of ashes, so he might die as a penitent, he passed away, murmuring the word "Jerusalem."

Many tributes have been paid to the beauty of Louis IX.'s character, the greatest of all being that of a famous French philosopher (Voltaire), who said, "It is not given man to carry virtue to a higher point." This king was canonized — made a saint — twelve years after his death, and is the only one in France's long list popularly known by the title of Saint.

XXXVIII. EFFECT OF THE CRUSADES

THE eighth crusade was the last of its kind, for all later crusades were undertaken merely for gain, and not at all in the old religious spirit. Although, with the exception of the first, none of these undertakings proved wholly successful, the crusades brought about many changes for the better in Europe. Not only did they extend people's knowledge, but they furthered commerce, encouraged the navy, and introduced many new customs, new plants, and new goods in the kingdom. Mulberry

trees, velvet, silk, linen and cotton goods, windmills, and chickens are a few of the common things which France owes to the crusades.

These expeditions also rid the country of many adventurers, and of most of the undisciplined noblemen, so many of whom perished in foreign lands that very few were left to trouble the public peace. Besides, during the crusades, masters and men so often had to share the same hardships and perils, that they grew to depend more and more upon each other; and, distance lending enchantment to their homes, they learned to feel much more of a patriotic spirit. Finding, in time of peril, that unity meant strength, the nobles who engaged in the crusades gradually learned to submit to discipline, and instead of fighting independently as before, now began to combine their efforts.

It was during the crusades, and especially at the siege of Antioch, — where such hosts were assembled, — that distinctive signs on arms and banners were first seen. Then, too, family names first came into use, for while baptismal names might do at home, they were not sufficient to distinguish one John, for instance, from another. Thus, John, the son, was distinguished from John, the father, by being called John Johnson; and Thomas the swarthy, and a pale-faced namesake, were called, respectively, Thomas Brown and Thomas White. Some were known by the name of the province or town whence they had come, as Godfrey of Bouillon, and others by physical peculiarities, as James Cruikshank (the crooked-legged).

In nearly all the crusades, France bore a prominent part. For that reason the account of the crusades is generally considered part of her history, and France, besides,

can claim the honor of having given several kings to Jerusalem.

Philip III. — called the Bold, because when a mere child he boastfully announced that "he was not afraid of the Saracens" — returned home from the fatal eighth crusade, bringing with him the coffins of his father, wife, son, brother, and brother-in-law. His first royal act had been to make a treaty with the Bey of Tunis, whereby all Christian captives should be freed, and the war expenses paid. Then, considering it wiser to relinquish all further attempt to carry on his father's visionary plans, he returned home, to undertake the government of his realm. By the death of many relatives and subjects at Tunis, his crown estates had been greatly increased, and he soon found himself master, in his own right, of about half the land in all France.

King Philip, having lost his first wife, married a second, but his barber and favorite, becoming jealous of this lady, soon accused her of practicing magic arts, and of having thereby caused the death of her young stepson. The king foolishly listened to these accusations, and the queen might actually have been burned as a witch, had she not been declared innocent by a "wise woman."

Shortly after that, a package of letters was mysteriously brought to the king, who, after reading them, ordered the arrest and execution of the barber, who had hitherto had all his confidence. Although no one ever knew exactly what the papers contained, it was believed that they brought clear proof of this man's guilt, else he would not have been executed so promptly.

Just before the eighth crusade, Charles of Anjou (ăn′joo,

or, äN-zhoo′), brother of Louis IX., led a French army to the conquest of Sicily and southern Italy, or Na′ples. A few years later his rule was interrupted by a terrible massacre of the French troops stationed in Sicily, and as this outbreak took place just as the bells were ringing for evening prayers, it is known as the Sicilian Vespers (1282). Although a few Frenchmen tried to escape by assuming disguises, it is said they were all recognized by being asked to pronounce certain words, which none but Italian natives could utter correctly, thus making new use of an ancient test mentioned in Old Testament history.[1]

After this massacre, — which was laid to the charge of the Spaniards, who also wanted Sicily, — the French king prepared to make an expedition into Spain. But he was taken ill on the way, and died (1285) before he could carry out any of his ambitious plans.

XXXIX. THE BATTLE OF THE SPURS

PHILIP IV., the Handsome, although only seventeen when he succeeded his father, Philip III., was of a cold, cruel, and calculating nature. After marrying an heiress, and thereby still further enlarging his estates, he began to covet the provinces of Guienne in the south of France, and Flanders in the north.

Guienne belonged to Edward I., King of England, so a quarrel which arose between some French and English seamen offered the necessary pretext to begin a war (1294).

[1] See *Story of the Chosen People*, p. 105.

Throughout this struggle, Philip continually sent help to the Scotch, who were then fighting against the English king, while Edward tried to pay him back by making trouble for him in Flanders.

The King of France, however, was clever enough to attract the Count of Flanders to Paris, lock him up and keep him a prisoner until he was ready to do whatever his master wished. But, when released, the count tried to avenge himself for this treatment; so Philip, marching against him, besieged his city of Lille (leel). When it finally surrendered, the war came to an end, and it was arranged that while the main part of Flanders should henceforth belong to Philip, Guienne should remain in the hands of the English.

To seal this peace, two royal marriages were agreed upon, one of them being between Edward's son and Philip's daughter Isabella. This marriage was, in time, to cause great trouble for France, but just then no one dreamed that it could ever make any difference to the country, for the king, besides his fair daughter, had three stalwart sons to continue his race.

Philip IV. was well pleased with his new estates in Flanders, where the cities were rich and plenty reigned. Even the wives of common burghers dressed with such magnificence that the queen was heard to remark one day in a very jealous tone, "Until now, I had thought that I was the only queen, but I see here more than six hundred!"

The customs and fashions of those days were very different from what they are now; we are told, for instance, that even at court parties it was customary for each gentle-

man to eat off the plate of the lady beside him. Ladies then wore very high headdresses richly bejeweled, while the gentlemen were noticeable mainly on account of their shoes, with pointed toes which curved upward and were fastened to their knees by little gilt chains.

Philip left a French governor in charge of his newly won estates, but this man was so grasping and tyrannical that he soon provoked a revolt, which broke out in the town of Bruges (broo′jez) one day just as matins were being rung. Before the bells had fairly ceased their chimes, three thousand Frenchmen lost their lives, so the "Matins of Bruges" (1302) are considered as fatal as the "Sicilian Vespers."

When the news of this massacre reached court, the French promptly armed to punish Flanders, and Philip set out at the head of large forces to meet the enemy at Courtrai (koor-trĕ′, 1302). There the famous encounter known as the "Battle of the Spurs" was fought. The French knights, seeing nothing but common soldiers before them, spurred on in such eager haste to attack and destroy them, that they failed to notice a deep ditch lying between them and the foe. Their horses, plunging madly into this gap, threw disorder in the ranks, and the enemy, standing on the opposite bank, easily slew them while they were trying to scramble out of this awkward place. Such was the number of Flemings who suddenly appeared on all sides to take part in this fight, that Philip exclaimed in dismay: "Does it then rain Flemings?"

The Flemings were so proud of the victory won at Courtrai, that they hung up in the cathedral of that city seven thousand spurs taken from their dead foemen.

There these trophies remained until the French came back, some time later, and avenged the death of their countrymen.

Philip might have ended the war with Flanders sooner, had not some of his energies been diverted by a quarrel with the Pope. The Pope issued a "Bull" (a papal decree) to reprove the king, and Philip retorted with a proclamation in which he openly defied the Pope.

Philip finally hired a band of adventurers to capture the Pope in his native city. They treated him cruelly and put him in prison, where he dared eat little for fear of being poisoned. Although he was released at the end of three days by the people, who rose up in his favor, he died soon after of shock. The next Pope deemed it his first duty to try to punish those who had tortured his predecessor; but, shortly after he had done so, he died so suddenly that many people thought he was poisoned.

A Pope was now elected, who settled at Avignon (à-veen-yôN′, 1309). As this Pope and his successors lived in this city for nearly seventy years (until 1376), the time they spent there is often known in Church history as the "Babylonian Captivity," which, as you know, lasted a similar length of time.[1]

In 1348, the county and city of Avignon were given to the Church, and formed part of the territory of the Holy See until 1791, when they were seized by the French, who have kept possession of them ever since. The palace where the Popes once lived can still be seen in the quaint old city, which, although *in* France, did not really belong to it for those four hundred and forty-three years.

[1] See *Story of the Chosen People*, p. 206.

XL. DEATH OF THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

OWING to his many wars and sinful extravagance, Philip needed a great deal of money, which he tried to obtain in every way in his power. Besides imposing heavy taxes on the people, and despoiling the Jews, — whom he finally drove out of France, — he also clipped the coin, and minted money of such low value that he was dubbed "the False Coiner."

From an Old Print.

The Temple.

All these ways not being sufficient to supply his vast demands, Philip next resolved to confiscate the wealth of the Knights Templar, many of whom, after about two hundred years, had come to settle in France. Besides the castles they owned here and there in all parts of the country, they were masters of a large part of the city of Paris, where they had a huge fortress known as "the Temple."

Because they formed a secret society, and because the members of their order were pledged never to reveal what passed in their meetings, common people suspected them of horrible and impious ceremonies. All manner of crimes

were thus laid at their door, and although nothing could be proved against them, the king had them arrested in 1307.

To force the Templars to confess that they were guilty, they were subjected to awful tortures, after being weakened by long imprisonment. While on the rack, many of these poor sufferers acknowledged anything that was asked, but many of them took back their confessions as soon as they were released and had recovered their senses. These men were then condemned to be burned at the stake as perjurers and heretics.

The Grand Master of the order, Molay′, was kept in prison for several years, and then met the same fate. He showed great courage on this occasion, and died like a hero, singing hymns even when the flames arose around him. He is also said to have uttered an awful prophecy from the pyre, declaring that the Pope — who had permitted the arrest and execution of the Knights Templar — would die within forty days, and King Philip within the year. Strange to relate, this prophecy came true. The Pope died while on a journey, within the given time; and, before the year was ended, Philip, too, passed away, owing to a hunting accident.

During his reign, Philip increased his estates by adding to the crown lands Flanders, Champagne, and the city of Lyons, which had hitherto been a free commune. Many important institutions also date back to the time of this king, among others the assembly known as the "States-General" (1302). This was composed of three divisions, — the nobles, the clergy, and the burghers, — forming the three estates or three classes of society. They were

called together mainly to help the king secure more money for his many needs.

Philip IV. left three sons, who, in the course of the next fourteen years, came to the throne in turn; they were the last of the direct Capetian line. The first of these princes was Louis X., the Quarrelsome. No sooner had Philip died, and this young prince succeeded him, than the nobles — still striving to recover some of their lost privileges — rebelled again. But the new king soon succeeded in quieting them.

The people, having been overtaxed during his father's rule, also clamored for redress, so the king, not knowing how else to satisfy them, allowed them to persecute his father's minister of finance, who was accused of having robbed the country to enrich himself. This poor man was also charged with using magic arts to cause the king's death, and for that reason was arrested and hanged.

Being in constant need of money, yet not wishing to enrage his people any further by imposing new taxes, Louis X. allowed serfs on his estates to buy back their freedom, and thus, while the king's needs were relieved, the number of serfs in France was greatly diminished.

Although strong and healthy, Louis X. died young, having taken a drink of very cold water after overheating himself at a game of tennis. During his brief final illness, this king arranged that his children should be placed in the care of his brother Philip, who should be regent of the realm for the next eighteen years. But Louis's only son (John I.) having died shortly after this, in infancy, Philip promptly claimed the crown for himself, in preference to his little niece, declaring only males could occupy the throne.

Although women were allowed to inherit other estates in France, the lawyers — who all sided with the regent, Philip — agreed to this, and enforced what is known as the "Sal'ic Law," whereby women could not claim the crown of France.

Philip V., the Long, thus succeeded his elder brother. During his brief reign of six years, he effected many wise reforms, not only in government and in finance, but also in the laws of the country. It happened, however, that the very law which he had so eagerly revived to deprive his niece of the throne, was enforced by his younger brother Charles when Philip died, leaving daughters but no son.

XLI. THE BEGINNING OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

AS we have seen, by the Salic Law the crown finally came to the third and last of Philip IV.'s sons, Charles IV., who is also known by the surname of the Handsome. He reigned only six years, but during that time showed great interest in learning, and in the revival of poetry. In fact, he is said to have established poetical tournaments in the south, where — as all the prizes offered were garlands of fresh flowers — they became famous as "Floral Games," and were patronized by knights, fair ladies, poets, and painters for many years.

Charles IV. died in 1328, leaving only a daughter to claim the succession, and thus for the third time in fourteen years the Salic Law was called into play. But this time the crown of France had to pass out of the direct

Capetian line to a cousin of the king, the son of Philip IV.'s brother (see pages 363, 364). Because this prince belongs to the Valois (và-lwä′) branch of the Capetian family, he and his six successors are often called the "Valois Kings." They come immediately after the fifteen direct Capetian rulers, who, as we have seen, governed France from 987 to 1328.

But the new king, Philip VI., did not come to the throne unchallenged, for the crown was also claimed by Edward III., King of England, whose mother, Isabella, was a sister of the late kings. He said that even if a woman could not inherit in France, there was no reason why she could not transmit the crown to her son. A third claimant of the crown, the husband of Louis X.'s daughter, also appeared, boasting, moreover, of being himself a descendant of Philip III. As the claims of two of these candidates were derived, in part at least, from women, they were soon set aside, and the throne definitely assigned to Philip VI., the next in the line of males. It was also decided that the crown should always remain in the hands of a Frenchman, and never by marriage, or otherwise, pass into the possession of a foreigner.

The two other candidates were sorely disappointed. Edward III., still a minor, submitted, but with ill grace, while the other candidate had to be bribed by the gift of the kingdom of Navarre (nȧ-vär′), to renounce all rights to the French crown and to the provinces which he claimed in that country in his wife's name.

Ever since the Norman Conquest (1066), there had been great rivalry between France and England, and many times already war had broken out. This rivalry now be-

came more marked than ever, as we enter the period which is known in history as "the Hundred Years' War," although it really covers one hundred and sixteen years (1337–1453).

The Flemings had submitted reluctantly to French rule, and they hastened to take advantage of a change of dynasty to rebel, being upheld in this bad conduct by the English. But as the new French king was a brave and energetic man, he immediately set forth, and, by winning a battle (Cassel, 1328), compelled the Flemish to obey him.

All the advantage won by this victory was, however, lost by an unwise decree, in which he forbade these people to purchase wool from the English. Now, as the Flemish lived mostly by weaving, and depended on England for their supply of raw material, this decree threatened to ruin them, so they rose up again in 1336, led by James van Ar'teveld. This leader not only begged Edward III. of England to come to his aid, but also advised him to assume the title of King of France, and assert his claim to the throne, arms in hand.

Edward III., whose pride had been hurt because he had been compelled to do homage to Philip VI. for his French estates, and who, besides, owed a grudge to France for helping the Scots, was just hesitating whether to follow this welcome advice or not, when a French knight, who had taken refuge at his court, brought matters to a climax.

This knight, it seems, had tried to win a French estate by fraud, had been found guilty, and had avoided death only by a clever escape from prison. Being a bitter and outspoken enemy of Philip VI., — who had prosecuted him, — he soon made friends at the English court. There, at a

banquet one day, he had a heron publicly served to the king. At that time, such a proceeding was considered equivalent to a charge of cowardice, so every one watched eagerly to see what effect the taunt would produce. Springing to his feet, Edward III. — who was anything but timid — stretched out his right hand over the symbolical bird, and then and there took a solemn oath to begin war against France.

The first serious encounter in the Hundred Years' War was the naval battle of Sluis (slois, 1340), where the French fleet was destroyed; but as neither country was then ready to continue hostilities, a truce was soon made. It is said that no one at first dared to announce this terrible defeat to the French king, and that the court fool bròke the news by remarking, "Well! the English are great cowards!" When Philip asked why, the man rejoined, "Because they did not dare jump boldly into the sea, at Sluis, like our brave French and Normans!"

XLII. THE SIEGE OF CALAIS

NOT long after this, the province of Brittany was claimed by two parties, each headed by a woman bearing the name of Joan. The King of France siding with one faction, Edward III. naturally took the part of the other. In the "War of the Two Joans," as this feud is called, the French and English were therefore again opponents, and it was nearly twenty-five years before the quarrel was definitely settled.

During this struggle, Edward III. once brought his

troops within a few miles of Paris; but, not daring to attack, he soon retreated toward the northwest. He had just crossed the Somme (sōm) River, when the French army overtook him near the village of Crécy (crā-see′), where a famous battle was fought (1346).

During this encounter, the Black Prince, Edward's fifteen-year-old son, won his spurs, and the English proved victorious, although their troops were only about one third as numerous as those of the French. The French defeat on this occasion was due to the fatigue of the soldiers, who had marched on without rest to overtake the enemy; to the fact that the hired bowmen allowed their bowstrings to get wet; to the favorable position occupied by the English, who had the sun behind them, while it shone full in the faces of their opponents; and to the total lack of discipline and restraint in the French ranks.

Finding their bowmen useless, the French knights actually spurred over them in their eagerness to reach the enemy. But their headlong courage proved of no avail, for the English bowmen shot well, and some of the French horses, hearing for the first time the reports of English cannon, soon became unmanageable. The battle of Crécy is said to have been the first where cannon were used, although gunpowder had been known for some time.

Many French knights greatly distinguished themselves by their reckless courage on this day. As for the blind King of Bohe′mia, who had accompanied the French army, he no sooner learned that his brave son had perished, than he bade his servants lead him into the very thickest of the battle, so that he might strike a blow before he died. Tying the horses' bridles together, so that nothing could part

them, these men led the heroic old monarch into the fray, and died there with him. Touched by this deed, the Black Prince adopted the King of Bohemia's motto and crest as his own; that is why, ever since then, the Prince of Wales's crest has been three ostrich plumes with the German motto (*Ich dien*) "I serve."

The English triumph at Crécy was great, and the French loss was enormous. King Philip had to be dragged away from the battlefield almost by force. Late at night, he knocked at the gate of a neighboring castle, asking admittance, and when the warden suspiciously inquired, "Who goes there?" sadly answered, "It is the unfortunate King of France; open and admit him!"

The English, having won such a signal victory at Crécy, now passed on to besiege the town of Calais (căl′ā, or, cȧ-lĕ′), which lies directly opposite Do′ver, where the Channel is narrowest, and which thus promised the best foothold′ for them in France. But this city was so well fortified and so bravely defended, that although no help reached its inhabitants, the King of England had to wait nine long months until famine compelled them to surrender.

Exasperated by this long resistance, Edward declared he would spare the people only on condition that six of the most prominent burghers came to him, barefooted, clad in their shirts, with halters around their necks, ready to be hanged as scapegoats for the sins of their fellow-citizens. When this became known to the governor of Calais, he thought that all was lost; but a brave citizen soon volunteered to be the first of the victims, and his generous devotion was immediately imitated by five other prominent citizens. When these six gaunt burghers appeared before

King Edward, scantily clad and humbly bearing the keys of the city, he harshly ordered them executed; but his wife Philippa, more merciful than he, pleaded so eloquently with him for their release, that he finally consented to forgive them (1347). A fine monument now stands in

Painting by Picot.

The Siege of Calais.

Calais, representing the starving burghers, whose memory is justly kept very green in France, and particularly in their native city.

The detailed story of the battle of Crécy, of the siege of Calais, and of the heroism of its six burghers, has been admirably told by a French historian named Froissart, who

lived at that time, and vividly described these stirring scenes. This is one of the French classics which has been translated into English, and which all young people greatly enjoy.

By order of Edward III., the French inhabitants were all driven out of Calais and replaced by Englishmen, who kept this port for more than two hundred years, in spite of all the efforts the French made to recover possession of it. To show they meant to retain it forever, the English even placed this taunting rhyme above the city gate:—

"When lead and iron swim like wood,
A siege of Calais may be good."

Owing to the appearance of a terrible pestilence, known as the Black Death, the war came to an abrupt pause in 1348. This disease, which came from the East, swept over all Europe, carrying away more than one third of the population; and it was because both the French and the English were so busy burying their dead, that they concluded a seven years' truce, during which Philip VI. manfully tried to bring order in his realm.

The death of so many of his subjects, added to heavy war taxes, had sorely impoverished France; so, to secure funds, the king resorted to the old means of altering the coin. Then, finding that insufficient, he decreed that all the salt used in his realm should be bought from the government, and that each family should be required to purchase a certain amount every year. This salt tax (*gabelle*) was soon to prove a sore burden to the French, a burden which became more and more galling as time went on.

Philip VI.'s domains were largely increased by the pur-

chase of Dauphiné (dō-fee-nā′), a province in the south-eastern part of France. This land was bought by the king (1349) for his grandson Charles, who was therefore given the title of "Dau′phin." About one year after this, Philip VI. died (1350), leaving his son John II. to continue the terrible Hundred Years' War. Thus the Dauphin Charles, John's eldest son, became heir to the throne. When, in his turn, he became King Charles V., he gave the title of Dauphin to his eldest son, and decreed that the name should always thereafter be borne by the heir to the French throne.

XLIII. THE BATTLE OF POITIERS

KING JOHN was called John II. in deference to the little son of Louis X., who reigned only ten days, but who nevertheless figures in the list of kings of France as John I. John II. was thirty-one years old, but, having received a more romantic than useful education, was hardly prepared to make a good king. Still, people said he was so generous, so impetuous, and meant so well, that he was known as John the Good.

He began his reign, however, by an act of great injustice, for he slew one of his father's ministers on mere suspicion of treachery. Then, not finding sufficient funds in the royal treasury, he, too, altered the coin, and finally summoned the States-General to impose new taxes upon his people.

On this occasion, the States-General first proposed that the nobles, who had hitherto paid no taxes, should pay

their share. This suggestion proved so unwelcome to the lords, that many of them joined Charles the Bad, of Navarre, who, although his father had formally renounced all claims to the crown of France, was doing all he could to win adherents in the country.

Thus, you see, when John, the second Valois king, came to the throne of France, it was claimed also by Edward III. of England and by Charles of Navarre. Charles, who had married the king's daughter, and made friends with the Dauphin, became daily more insolent and daring, until he actually murdered the new general in chief appointed by John, under pretext that this man was a foreigner and had no right to command French troops! Such a high-handed deed naturally angered the monarch, who might have taken his revenge then and there, had not the women of the family interfered, and patched up a peace.

Before long, Charles was suspected of treacherously preparing to join the English. So the king surprised him one day when he was secretly dining with the Dauphin, and after killing some of his followers, clapped him in prison. Hearing of this, the friends of Charles the Bad openly joined the English, with whom France resumed war, for the seven years' truce had just come to an end.

During these seven years, although the kings themselves did not fight, several armed duels had taken place between knights of the two nations. The most famous of these encounters is the "Battle of the Thirty," waged between equal numbers of French and English nobles. In the midst of the fray, Beaumanoir (bo-mä-nwär′), leader of the French, wounded and almost dying of thirst, faltered and

was about to surrender, but one of his companions, seeing his plight, cried out, "Drink your own blood, Beaumanoir, and your thirst will be quenched!" This Spartan encouragement so steeled the leader's arm, that he fought on until victory was secure.

When war broke out again, the English soldiers swept over the northern provinces, cleverly avoiding the battle which John was so eager to wage. When the northwestern part of the country had been laid waste, the English, under the leadership of the Prince of Wales, invaded southern France and began to burn and plunder there also.

This decided John to summon all the members of his recently instituted "Order of the Star," who pledged their word to die or be taken prisoners, but never to retreat. He also called all the other nobles, and when he found himself at the head of a magnificent army, marched boldly southward to attack the English forces, which were only about one tenth as large as his own.

The two armies met at Poitiers (1356), where the Prince of Wales proposed a peaceful settling of the quarrel; but the French insisted on such humiliating conditions, that he rejected them with scorn, and prepared to sell his life as dearly as possible. Although outnumbered, the English had the advantage in position; so they cleverly made the best of this, and succeeded in repelling the French onslaught. The ground would permit only a small part of the French to attack them at once. When the English suddenly swept down on the rest of the army, a panic ensued, and the day ended in a disastrous rout in which many Frenchmen lost their lives.

Three of the French princes, young and inexperienced

men, fled with their attendants, — an example speedily followed by the bulk of the army. In fact, only a small number remained true to the king, who, too proud to retreat, hewed right and left like a giant, piling up corpses around him until all his followers were either slain or taken prisoners.

Throughout this battle, his fourteen-year-old son, Philip, stood close beside him, and helped him by keeping a sharp lookout, and by constantly warning him on which side to turn to fend off the most threatening blows. But, in spite of John's valor, and of his son's devotion, the battle of Poitiers was lost, and the king finally was obliged to surrender his sword to a knight, who conducted him immediately to the Prince of Wales's tent. There he was treated with the utmost courtesy, the Prince even waiting upon him at table in person, just as if he had been England's honored guest, and not her prisoner.

Meantime, the English host pursued the fugitives, securing more prisoners than their army numbered soldiers. These were, as a rule, released upon parole, only a few of the most important being detained until their ransoms could be paid. Among the latter were the king and his young son Philip, who, in that day's fighting, earned the nickname of "the Bold," by which he is well known. The royal prisoners were conveyed to London, where they made a triumphal entrance. We are told the Prince of Wales had his royal captive ride a fine war horse, while he escorted him, mounted on a mere pony. During John's sojourn of four years in England, he was entertained more as a guest than as a prisoner.

XLIV. SEVEN YEARS OF MISERY (1356–1363)

ONCE before, in the days of Louis IX., a French king had fallen into the hands of the enemy, but in those days France was well governed, and the king paid his own ransom (see page 131). Now, while King John was a captive, a large part of the country had been laid waste, the people were in sore straits, and the Dauphin Charles, who had fled from the field of battle, was too young and inexperienced to steer the ship of state well.

While each of the nobles released on parole hastened home to wring out of his dependents money enough to pay his ransom, the Dauphin went on to Paris, where he hurriedly called the States-General. But, when this body met, it declared firmly that it would help the Dauphin only on condition that he should promise to dismiss his father's ministers, — who had proved unwise, — to follow the advice of the States-General, and to release Charles the Bad from prison.

These conditions seemed too exacting to Prince Charles, who set out on a journey, leaving things unsettled, — a state of affairs which proved galling in the extreme to the peasants. They were generally called Jacques Bonhomme (zhäk bō-nōm′), — just as Confederate soldiers in the American Civil War were called Johnnies. Having been robbed of everything to pay the ransoms of the nobles taken at Poitiers, they were now goaded to rebel. Armed with scythes and pitchforks, they banded together, attacked the castles, and plundered and burned them, after torturing and slaying the women and children left alone in many cases to guard them.

This revolt of the peasants, known as the Jacquerie (zhäk-ree′), lasted about six weeks, and added greatly to the horrors and suffering of that time. But finally the nobles joined forces, vigorously attacked the peasant mob, and after butchering about seven thousand of the rebels, so frightened the remainder that they ceased to fight.

Meanwhile the States-General met again. Their leaders were Marcel′, provost of the Paris merchants, and the Bishop of Laon, (läN) — two men who were well-known patriots, and by their wise conduct had won immense popularity. This time the Dauphin, duly awed, granted the States-General all they asked, giving them, among other privileges, the right to assemble whenever they pleased, without being called by the king. But although lavish of promises, he proved so slow in executing them, that members of the States-General resorted to violence. The King of Navarre was rescued from prison by his friends, and Marcel, at the head of a deputation, actually forced his way into the palace, and there, in the Dauphin's presence, slew two of the objectionable ministers.

The young prince, terrified by this violence, again promised all the people wished, donned a red and blue cap, — the badge of the Paris burghers, — and allowed himself to be taken to the city hall and exhibited in this guise to the excited mob. It is because Marcel thus defended the people's rights, that his equestrian statue now graces one of the courts of the new city hall (Hôtel de Ville), erected on the site of the one to which he conducted the Dauphin on this occasion.

Shortly after this, having again joined the nobles, — who were jealous of Marcel and of the burgher class

which he headed, — the Dauphin threatened to besiege Paris and put Marcel to death. Thus hard pressed, Marcel offered to surrender the city to Charles the Bad, by unlocking one of the city gates for him one night. He was, however, surprised, keys in hand, by another city magistrate, who, raising his ax, felled him to the ground.

The Parisians, who were very loyal as a rule, and who kept a wax taper burning night and day in Notre Dame until John's return, were awed by the danger they had just escaped. They now invited the Dauphin to return to the city, and loyally helped him fight the King of Navarre, who, at the head of hosts of disbanded soldiers, swept over the surrounding country, laying everything waste.

These stray soldiers were known as the Great Companies, and the country people were so afraid of them that they actually built underground refuges, where they remained in hiding with their families and cattle as long as any of these robbers were in sight. The Dauphin, pitying the sufferings of the people, was about to lead an army against the King of Navarre and these Great Companies, when the women of both families again interfered, and the two princes patched up another peace (1359).

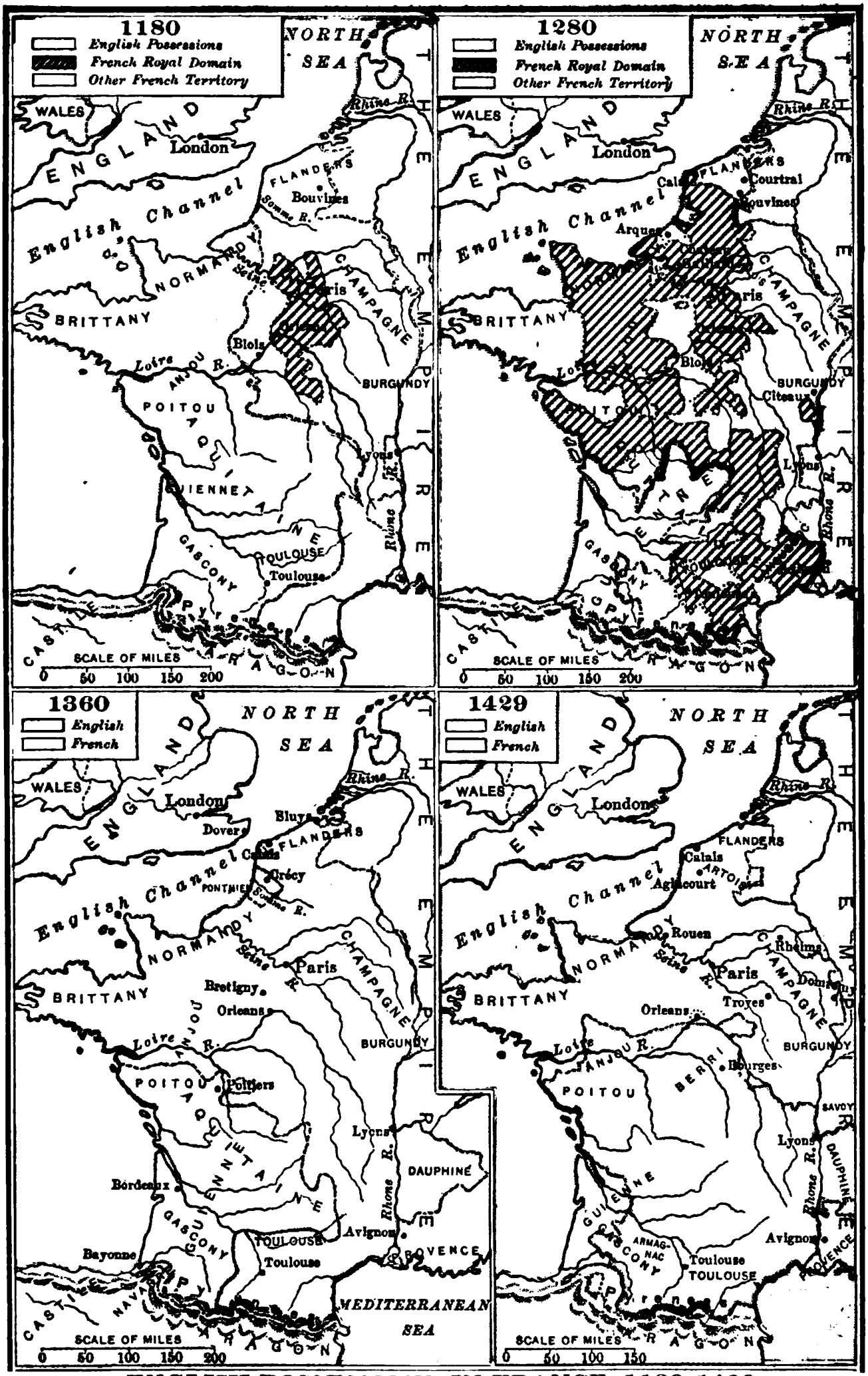
The following year, weary of exile, John signed a treaty with Edward, promising him the western half of France and four million gold crowns (coins) as his ransom. But, as France refused to ratify this humiliating document, the English king again invaded the unhappy country, plundering and burning everywhere.

This terrible state of affairs was ended by the treaty of Bretigny (brĕ-teen-yee′, 1360), whereby Edward gave up

all claim to the crown of France, receiving instead the southwest quarter of France (see third map, page 163) and a ransom of three million gold crowns. But it is said that the first installment of this ransom had to be raised by selling a little princess — the king's daughter — to the Visconti (vees-cōn′tee) family in Milan, who supplied the necessary sum in exchange for the honor of being connected by marriage with the royal family.

All these matters having been satisfactorily arranged, John left two of his sons as hostages in the hands of the English, and came home. But the people on the lands he had ceded to England were very unhappy, many of them insisting that the king had no right whatever to dispose of them, and that they were and would always remain Frenchmen. In fact, the mayor of La Rochelle (rō-shĕl′) only expressed the general sentiment when he said, "We shall submit to the English with our lips, but never with our hearts!"

Their sorrow and the general misery were now increased by a reappearance of the plague, which for the next three years again swept all over the French provinces. Even princes fell victims to it this time, and the whole ducal family of Burgundy having been carried away by it, this vast province unexpectedly reverted to the crown. King John, mindful of the bravery his son Philip the Bold had shown at the battle of Poitiers, now bestowed Burgundy upon him, and he thus became head of the second ducal family of Burgundy, just as Robert's brother (see page 104) had been founder of the first. But this disposal of Burgundy greatly angered Charles of Navarre, who claimed that province in his mother's name.



ENGLISH POSSESSIONS IN FRANCE, 1180-1429

XLV. THE BRAVE DU GUESCLIN

THE Great Companies, which had long proved very troublesome, were now sent to Italy, while the king went to visit the Pope at Avignon, where he announced his intention soon to set out on a new crusade. Then, hoping to induce the King of England either to join him, or to sign a treaty promising not to attack France during his absence, John was preparing to visit England a second time, when he learned that one of his sons, who had been sent there as a hostage, had escaped.

Chivalrously declaring, "If good faith were banished from the rest of the world, it ought still to be found in the hearts of kings!" the French monarch immediately proceeded to London (1364), where he was again received with great rejoicings. But before negotiations could be brought to an end, John fell seriously ill, and died abroad, leaving the throne to his son Charles V.

The king who now came to the throne, had, as we have seen, served as regent during his father's captivity in England, and therefore already had some experience. Still, his reputation was not of the kind to promise a very favorable reign, for he had fled at Poitiers, and was therefore despised as a coward by the nobles; he had quarreled with the burghers of Paris, who all hated him; and as for the peasants, they ascribed to his bad management many of the troubles under which they were groaning. Thus all three classes of society may be said to have been banded against him, when he mounted the throne at his father's early death.

Although homely, sickly, and never much of a warrior

himself, Charles V. soon proved that he knew how to choose the best men to fight for him; and he made such good use of his intellectual gifts, — which were of a high order, — that he earned the surname of "the Wise."

The most famous of all his generals was the brave Du Guesclin (gĕ-klăn′), who, besides being brave did not scorn

Drawing by Du Semane.

Du Guesclin rides to the Tournament.

to make use of strategy or even fraud to get the better of a foe. Small and ugly, but very stout of heart, Du Guesclin, when a mere boy, once entreated his father to take him to a tournament. The father having scornfully refused, the lad rode off after him on a sorry farm nag, and waited near the lists until a wounded knight passed out. Du Guesclin, then following this lord to his tent, begged so earnestly for the loan of his horse and armor, that he

obtained what he wished. With visor down, the stripling then entered the lists, where he challenged and defeated all present, including his own father, to whom, however, he showed due filial respect as soon as he recognized him.

In the beginning of Charles V.'s reign, Du Guesclin, called to fight the troops of Navarre, went off gayly, promising the king a victory as a coronation present. Still, the young warrior, however brave, was very far from being sentimental: when his aunt hysterically implored him to come and kiss her ere he rode forth to his death, he bluntly cried, "Bah, go home and kiss your husband, but have dinner ready by the time I get back, for I shall be very hungry!"

The promise Du Guesclin had made to the king was duly kept, for he captured the city of Mantes from the forces of Navarre (1364), just in time to permit the news of this victory to reach Rheims, on the very day the king was anointed. Du Guesclin followed up this exploit by winning another victory; but in his next great battle (at Auray), he was less fortunate, for he then fell into the hands of his foes, and was detained prisoner until his ransom could be paid by the king.

This battle was soon followed by two treaties, one ending the Breton war, which had lasted about twenty-five years, and the other forcing Charles of Navarre to give up forever all claim to the French crown. But, although two of her troubles were thus ended, poor France was still suffering sorely from another, the constant and destructive raids of the Great Companies.

Charles, the clever planner, now determined to send

these forces into Spain, to fight a king there who had cruelly murdered his French wife; so Du Guesclin was ransomed and sent off at the head of this expedition. In Spain, these French troops again came face to face with their old enemies, the English, who of course sided with the foe. Once more Du Guesclin was made a prisoner. Seeing that the English did not set any ransom for his release, he artfully remarked, in the presence of the Prince of Wales, that every one must consider him the greatest knight in the world, as the English *dared* not let him go.

Stung by this taunt, the Prince of Wales immediately bade him name his own ransom, and when Du Guesclin fixed a very large sum, wonderingly inquired how he expected it would ever be paid. The French hero haughtily replied that the King of Spain, in whose behalf he had been fighting, would doubtless pay half, and the King of France the remainder, adding confidently that there was no woman or maid in France who would not gladly spin a distaff for his ransom.

His confidence was justified, for the ransom was promptly paid, and Du Guesclin, free once more, could resume fighting. In his next encounter with the foe he won a brilliant victory, thereby proving that the sacrifices made for him had not been in vain.

XLVI. THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF CHARLES V.

MEANTIME, the French king had been sitting quietly at home, managing finances and government so cleverly that the country was in a far more prosperous condition than it had been for many years. Instead of

oppressing his people by constantly asking for more funds, this ruler actually remitted a large part of the taxes they had hitherto paid, so as to enable them to strengthen the walls of their cities, and equip themselves properly. Thus, you see, he was quietly preparing to renew the old conflict with England, but this time with far better chances of success.

His opponent, Edward III., less prudcnt than he, was meanwhile devoting most of his energies to pleasure, so when Charles finally used the complaints of the southern lords as a basis for renewing the war, England was ill prepared to meet it. Charles V. began by sending a messenger to the Prince of Wales, summoning him to appear in Paris, to answer the charges made by the discontented lords. To this summons the fighting English Prince grimly retorted that he would certainly come, but with a helmet on his head and escorted by a force of sixty thousand men!

Undismayed by this answer, the King of France confiscated Guienne, where, helped by all those who were weary of English rule, he soon made great headway. The English, incensed by the falling away of many whom they had hitherto deemed friends, now became suspicious and revengeful, treating certain towns with such cruelty, that they daily lost further ground in the country.

Throughout this campaign the French made use of every device, often resorting to such trickery, for instance, as won back the city of La Rochelle, where the mayor was secretly in favor of the French. One day, when the English governor was dining with the mayor, a courier brought a letter from the English king. As warriors in those days

considered it beneath their dignity to know how to read, the governor simply handed the letter over to the mayor, begging him to read it aloud. Gravely pretending to comply, instead of a warning to be on their guard as treachery was afloat, the mayor read an order for the English garrison to join the citizen troops and hold a grand drill and review on the market place on the morrow. The unsuspecting English, therefore, deserted the fort, and were drilling down on the square, when Du Guesclin, obeying a secret signal from the mayor, suddenly entered and seized the fortress, thus recovering possession of La Rochelle for the French.

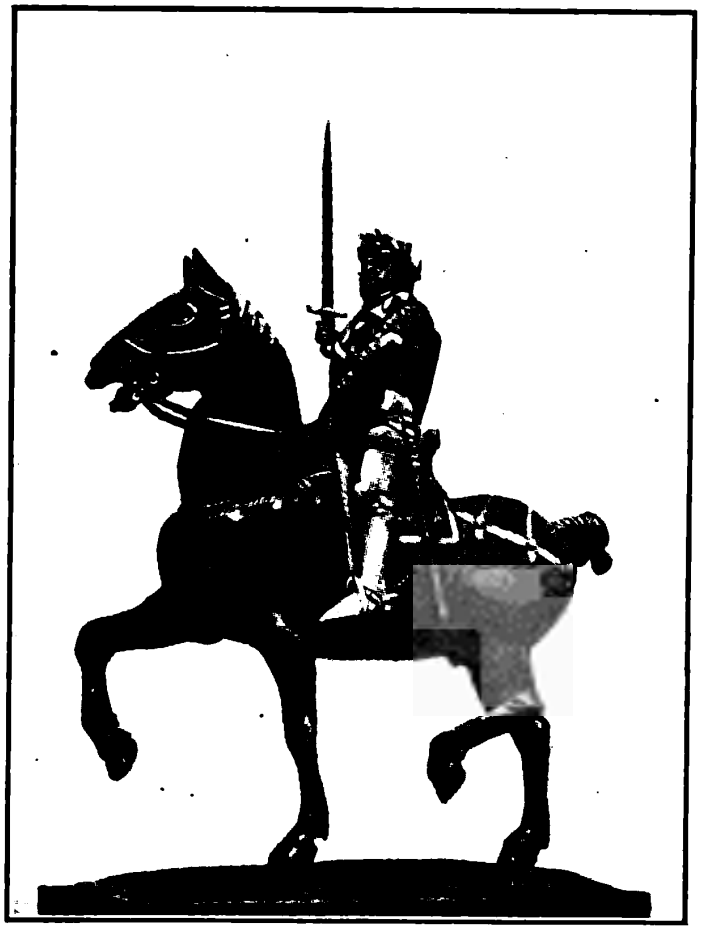
Although beaten in the south, and finally forced to leave Guienne, the English were far from discouraged. Three armies were sent one after another to invade France and reconquer what had been lost, although, owing to ill-health, the Prince of Wales could no longer lead them.

Charles V., knowing his towns were too well fortified and provisioned to yield easily, calmly allowed these armies to exhaust themselves by sweeping aimlessly over the deserted country, where, when they had burned villages and harvests, nothing remained for them to live upon. The French forces cut off stragglers and small bodies of the foe, but refused to fight any great battles, causing Edward III. to exclaim, "Never king armed himself so little, yet never man gave me so much to do!"

By these tactics, in which he was ably seconded by his generals, Charles V. succeeded in regaining all of France, save Calais, Bordeaux (bor-dō′), and three other cities on the coast. You see, these were very hard times for the English, for King Edward was old, the Prince of Wales

slowly dying, and the heir to the throne was only a child, unfit to take up the burden of the English government and continue the Hundred Years' War.

Du Guesclin, the man who had done so much for France, was, however, not long to survive his old opponent, the Prince of Wales. The year after the latter's death, Du Guesclin was besieging a strongly fortified castle which had promised to surrender to him at a certain date if not relieved, when he felt his end draw near.



Statue of Du Guesclin, at Dinan.

He gave his sword to a friend, saying: "It has aided me to conquer the enemies of my king. . . . I hand it over to you, protesting that I have never betrayed the honor that the king did me when he intrusted it to my keeping." Then this man, who was far in advance of his times in many respects, added, "Forget not, in whatever land you may be engaged in war, that people of the Church, women, and children are not your enemies." These were very different principles from those professed by most soldiers of his day, when the taking of a town or castle was only too often the signal for a hideous massacre, not even babes at the breast being spared.

Du Guesclin had just breathed his last, when the armistice ended, and the English governor appeared with the keys of the castle. It is said he firmly refused to hand them over to any one save Du Guesclin, on whose coffin he solemnly laid them with his own hands, thus faithfully keeping the promise he had made.

Charles V. was the next to die, — two months after the general who had done him such good service, and who lies buried beside him at St. Denis. This sickly king had done great things for France during his sixteen years' reign. Besides expelling the English, and settling the quarrels in Brittany and with Navarre, he had almost rid the country of the Great Companies, and had brought such order and economy into the government that he actually left great sums in the treasury, instead of huge debts as his predecessors had done.

It is also said that Charles gently but firmly deprived the nobles of many of their privileges, so that after him kings alone had the right to coin money, bestow titles, or declare war in France, while any one could appeal to the crown for redress, if dissatisfied with the judgment given by any of the nobles. The chief court of the realm was the Parliament of Paris, which was given a permanent home in an ancient palace, henceforth to be known as the Palace of Justice.

Charles, himself a student, not only founded the first royal library, — which boasted of nine hundred and ten volumes, — but had the Bible, and several Greek and Latin works, carefully translated. This king also founded hospitals, continued the construction of the Louvre, and began erecting the Bastille (bàs-teel′), a famous fortress in

Paris, to awe the citizens should they again attempt to rise up against the government, as had happened at the time of his regency. It was also to serve as state prison for political offenders, so it will often be mentioned hereafter, for it plays a tragic part later on in French history, as you will learn.

Although Charles once said the noble words, "Kings are happy only in having the power to do good," he did not always put this sentiment into practice; still, he was, on the whole, one of the good kings of France, and deserves special credit for protecting learning and encouraging progress.

It may, perchance, amuse you to read some homely social rules which a poet of Charles V.'s time gave to ladies. They were: "Do not be slovenly in your dress, and do not put your fingers in the dish at table. . . . Do not rush into a room, but before you open the door give a gentle cough. Walk slowly to church, and do not run or jump in the streets. Those of you who cannot read must learn the hymns at home, so as to keep pace with the priests. Do not steal. Do not tell lies."

XLVII. CHARLES VI.

CHARLES V. left the throne to his son Charles VI., but as the new ruler was only twelve years of age, four of his uncles undertook to govern the country in his name. Unfortunately, however, each one of these princes thought more of filling his own pockets and of furthering

his own interests, than of governing wisely, so you can imagine what the French people had to suffer.

One of these men, having recklessly spent the money found in his dead brother's treasury, proposed to raise more by levying a tax on everything that was sold in the realm. But a poor woman, who had sold a bunch of water cress, raised such an outcry when the tax collector asked her for a share of the price, that it occasioned a riot in Paris.

The rioters madly rushed to the arsenal to seize the iron mallets which had been stored there to use in defending the city against an attack from the King of Navarre, or the Great Companies; hence they were called the Malleters (*Maillotins*). Once armed with these weapons, which they handled with a will, the rioters promptly slew the tax collectors. This was a breach of law and order for which they might have been sorely punished, had not a worthy citizen interceded with the king to forgive them.

This good man (Desmarets), having incurred the royal displeasure some time after, was unjustly sentenced to death. Then the people, remembering how eloquently he had pleaded in their behalf, besought him on the way to the scaffold, to ask the king's mercy for himself, too; but he bravely answered, "I have served well and loyally his great-grandfather, his grandfather, and his father, and will now ask mercy of God alone, for if the king had had the age and knowledge of a man, he would never have been guilty of such a judgment upon me."

This great revolt of the Parisians was only a sample of what was taking place in many other parts of France, for everywhere people were growing weary of constant

mismanagement, and becoming more and more eager to settle matters to suit themselves. In Flanders, for instance, the citizens rebelled, and setting a leader (Philip van Arteveld) at their head, actually prepared to resist the king's army when it advanced to suppress them.

This war against Flanders — the first in which Charles VI. took part — is famous for another hard-fought battle, near Courtrai (1382), in which the French won a great victory, although some say their sacred banner, or oriflamme, was lost during the fray and never seen again. After this battle the French army proceeded to Courtrai, to rescue the French spurs kept there as trophies, and burn down the town, by way of further revenge for a former humiliating defeat (see page 141).

The king's uncles, who had made so many mistakes already, were now very busy, one of them in conquering the kingdom of Naples, — for which enterprise France had to furnish both money and men, — the others in taking possession of estates newly fallen to their share in Languedoc and in Flanders. Because they were thus deeply engaged, King Charles was allowed to assume the government at a very early age. Still, young as he was, he showed far more sense than his experienced uncles, for he soon recalled his father's capable ministers, and for the first few years of his personal reign honestly tried to do his best for people and country.

Now, it was customary in those days for kings to marry very early, so when Charles VI., at seventeen, beheld the fourteen-year-old Isabella of Bava'ria, and was charmed by her beauty, he proposed, was accepted, and married, — all in the course of a few days. Charles's wife was very

beautiful, but so young and untrained that she thought of nothing but dress and pleasure; and as she was unfortunately placed in the midst of a court noted for its depravity, it is not surprising that she soon learned all the evil there was for her to absorb, and none of the good.

From an Old Print.

Isabella of Bavaria.

Still, during the first few years, Isabella and her husband seemed to agree very nicely, for she taught Charles VI. to take almost as much pleasure in her favorite pastimes as she did herself. In fact, nothing seemed to break the continual round of royal amusements, not even the death of the king's uncle who had gone to Italy, or the loss of his French army, or the horrible death of Charles the Bad, who, feeling ill, had been wrapped in a sheet saturated with alcohol, which one of his servants accidentally set afire by coming too close with a light.

Having finally triumphed over rebellious Flanders, the French became eager to resume the old Hundred Years' War; so they began by preparing a large and sumptuous fleet to carry them over to England. By some mismanage-

ment, however, the right moment was missed, so all the money lavished upon this undertaking was simply wasted.

To forget this disappointment, the king now plunged more recklessly than ever into fêtes and dissipations. He celebrated with unwonted magnificence the marriage of his brother, the Duke of Orleans, with a princess from Milan, and his own interview with the uncles of the English king proved another occasion for festivities.

The following year, when only twenty-four, Charles VI., already weakened by excesses, was suffering an attack of low fever, when he heard that an attempt had been made to murder his general in chief, as the man was leaving the palace one evening. Infuriated by this insult, the king rose from his sick bed to pursue and punish the murderers, although his uncles and physicians besought him to wait until he felt stronger, and the intense summer heats were over.

Charles was riding through a forest with a small escort, when an old, disheveled, half-clad man suddenly sprang out of a thicket and seized the bridle of the king's horse, crying in awful tones, "Turn back, O king! Thou art betrayed!"

This apparition then vanished as suddenly as it had appeared, and the king — who was very superstitious — rode slowly on, wondering what such a strange warning might portend. He had just left the forest and was riding across a plain, when, overcome by the heat, one of the pages following him suddenly dropped the lance he carried, so that it clashed against his companion's armor.

The sharp click of weapons, breaking the summer stillness behind him, and falling upon a nervously appre-

hensive ear, startled the poor king into sudden insanity. He fell upon his escort, attacked his own brother, and was disarmed only when utterly exhausted by mad efforts to kill all around him.

For most of the time during the next thirty years, Charles VI. was insane, and was kept locked up in his palace, where he was often sorely neglected; we are told that for months his clothes were never changed, and that he ate and slept more like a wild beast than like a human being. His wife, who did not wish to be bothered with his care or amusement, soon picked out a peasant girl to act as nurse and share his solitude, and this ignorant girl proved more faithful and compassionate than his own kin or consort, for she always watched over him tenderly.

When the king was moderately well, he took great pleasure in seeing plays, which were then called "mysteries," "moralities," or "passions," according to the subjects of which they treated. He also indulged in cards, and we are told this well-known game was either invented or improved for his express benefit. Each card was symbolical, hearts representing the clergy; spades (pikes), the soldiers; diamonds (tiles), the workmen; and clubs (clover-leaves), the peasants. The four kings were dubbed David, Alexander, Cæsar, and Charles VI., and the four queens and knaves also bore names well known in the history and romances of the period.

The king's illness was probably made considerably worse by the extraordinary remedies used to cure him, and by the lack of proper hygiene in his care. You see, in those days, many people thought that the insane were

possessed by demons, and believed that sane people could easily be driven crazy by magic arts. To eject the evil spirit, therefore, and cure the king, all kinds of queer remedies were tried. Once, for instance, the poor man was made to drink a potion concocted out of ground pearls. But all the remedies proved futile, for it was only at times, and for a brief season, that he recovered his senses and feebly tried to govern his realm, which, during his insane periods, was misgoverned by his wife, his brother, and his uncles.

XLVIII. MISRULE IN FRANCE

DURING one of Charles VI.'s brief intervals of lucidity, Queen Isabella once gave a fancy dress ball to amuse him. The king and five companions were dressed in tights, upon which great bunches of flax had been sewed to make the wearers look like wild men or monkeys, and they came into the hall chained together, executing a fantastic dance.

Wishing to see their faces, so as to recognize the mummers, the king's brother seized a torch and approached so close that he set fire to their inflammable costumes. Thanks to the presence of mind of a court lady, who promptly wrapped her cloak around the king, his life was spared; but four of his companions died in awful torture, and the fifth escaped only by plunging into a tub of water, or fountain, near by.

This tragic event brought back the king's illness, so for a while his wife and his uncle Philip of Burgundy man-

aged things to suit themselves. Then the Burgundian uncle — who had so distinguished himself at Poitiers, but who seems never to have done anything very praiseworthy after that — passed away, leaving his son, John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy in his stead.

The new Duke of Burgundy and the king's brother — the Duke of Orleans — now became rivals, not only for the first place at court, but also for the favor of the queen, who smiled now on one and now on the other. To please this wicked woman, both dukes spent lavishly, and, in order to do so, wrung money out of the poor people in various ways, refusing meanwhile to pay their just debts.

Queen Isabella's vanity, love of pleasure, and lack of principle, were the more shameful because she was the mother of twelve delicate children, who would have been far better off had they received motherly care and attention. We are told that one boy after another died, until the fifth became Dauphin and at length succeeded his father. One daughter, Isabella, was married at the early age of seven to Richard II. of England,[1] and became his widow at twelve, only to marry a second time, at fifteen, a son of the Duke of Orleans, and die at twenty!

The quarrels between the two dukes for the queen's favor and for the control of the state led meanwhile to a dastardly crime. One night when the Duke of Orleans — with whom the Duke of Burgundy had pretended to be fully reconciled — was riding home through the unlighted streets of Paris, hired assassins suddenly pounced upon and slew one of his men (1407). The Duke of Orleans, thinking he had to deal with footpads only, called out his

[1] See *Story of the English*, p. 172.

name, whereupon the murderers cried that he was the very man they were seeking, and speedily finished their evil work by killing him, too. A moment later, a man was seen coming out of a house near by to ascertain that the right victim had been secured. This man was the Duke of Burgundy, in person, who at first tried to deny having any share in the crime, but who finally boasted openly of having rid himself of a dangerous rival.

As the king's council did not seem inclined to view the murder leniently, the Duke of Burgundy hastily fled to his own estates. Then he sent a preacher to Paris, to demonstrate, in a series of eloquent sermons, that his master had done a most praiseworthy deed in ridding the country of the Duke of Orleans, now accused of every imaginable crime. Strange to relate, these accusations were believed by many people, but the duke's widow defended him stanchly as long as she lived, and brought up his children to consider the murdered man a martyr, and to bear constantly in mind that they were to avenge his death as soon as the right moment came.

As the children of the murdered duke were too young and inexperienced to head any party, the father-in-law of the new Duke of Orleans headed it at first, and as this nobleman was Count of Armagnac (är-mȧn-yȧk′), his partisans all assumed that name. During the next fifteen years, the bitter quarrel between the Armagnacs and Burgundians occasionally smoldered, but often broke out into open, violent warfare.

First one party, then another, became master of Paris. Once the Duke of Burgundy armed the butchers, stirring them up to massacre ruthlessly all the Armagnacs they

could find. Then, in their hatred for each other, both parties in turn tried to win the ear of the crazy king in his lucid intervals, or sided with their old foes, the English.

At last the Parisians, weary of this highly uncomfortable state of affairs, recalled the fourth Dauphin, who once, during the sway of the Burgundians, had been snatched from his bed and carried safely out of the city in a bale of hay by a devoted servant. But this prince had no sooner returned to the capital and patched up a peace with the Burgundians, than he learned that the English, under Henry V., were again preparing to invade poor France (1415).

An immense army was immediately collected, and sent out to meet the English, who, after besieging one of the coast cities for a month, were in a pitiable condition, most of their soldiers being ill. The French, thinking it would be easy to win a brilliant victory over these foes, rashly refused to take the usual precautions. Driven to bay, the English doggedly awaited the attack at Agincourt (ȧ-zhăn-koor′). Here the French cavalry, restricted in space, and unable to maneuver, owing to rain-drenched, plowed fields, was utterly defeated in the third great battle of the Hundred Years' War (1415).

Owing to a rumor that the French were attacking their rear, the English on this occasion put to death most of their prisoners, thus carrying off only a few princes and noblemen to England. But among the former was the Duke of Orleans, a talented young man, who had first married the widowed Queen Isabella of England, as already mentioned, and had then married a daughter of the powerful Count of Armagnac.

thinking their rule would certainly be preferable to that of warring factions or of an insane king; but many of the other cities, scorning the treaty of Troyes, refused to recognize the English, and rallied loyally around the Dauphin, whom it was supposed to disinherit forever.

Strange to relate, the strong young English king died in France, a few months before the sickly French monarch whose title he had so confidently expected to bear for many a year. He left his crown to his baby son, Henry VI. When Charles VI. died soon after, the people mourned for him faithfully, calling him "the Beloved," for they realized that had he not been so sorely afflicted, he would doubtless have saved them from many of the misfortunes they had endured. A herald solemnly announced that Charles VI. was dead, and that Henry VI. was now King of England and France; but many loyal Frenchmen obstinately refused that title to a foreigner, and hailed the Dauphin as King Charles VII.

This poor monarch, however, had little power at first; he could not even go to Rheims and be anointed, for that city, as well as Paris and more than half his realm, was already in the hands of the English. In fact, the only section of country thoroughly loyal to him lay in the central part of the Loire country, so the English, — who pompously styled their own baby monarch "King of France and England," — derisively called Charles "King of Bourges" (boorzh).

Still, the despised "King of Bourges" was not downcast; he even devoted so much time to pleasure, that one of his generals bitterly declared he was "losing his realm right joyously!"

L. JOAN TO THE RESCUE

THE new reigns of Charles VII. (the heir of the demented Charles VI.) and of Henry VI. (the infant successor of bluff "King Hal") began unhappily for poor France, hesitating which of these monarchs to obey. On the one hand, Frenchmen naturally preferred a French king; but, on the other, they were told that if Queen Isabella was ready to deprive the Dauphin of the crown, it could only be because she knew that this youth was not really a son of the late king, and that he therefore had no right to the throne.

The English, being already masters of northern France, (fourth map, page 163) now proposed to complete their conquest, and for that purpose laid siege to Orleans. But Orleans was strongly fortified by great walls all around it, and the inhabitants, loyal to the French crown, were grimly determined to hold out as long as they could. Still, their position was one of great danger, and they soon realized that unless they received help, the English would become masters of the city in spite of all its brave resistance.

The French king, whose scanty troops had been routed by the English whenever they came into contact, had neither the men nor the money so sorely needed to relieve Orleans. It was just then, when the skies seemed darkest, that a heroine arose to save the country and drive away the English.

This heroine is Joan of Arc (Jeanne d'Arc), one of the most unselfish and picturesque persons that adorn the pages of history. Her short life is so romantic, and has

been so often a theme of inspiration for painters and writers of all kinds, that you must have a clear idea of her, of her deeds, and of her surroundings.

Joan of Arc was born in 1412, in a peasant cottage — which is still standing — at Domremy (dôn-rẽ-mee′) on the boundary of the provinces of Champagne and Lorraine. Like most country children in France, this little girl ran about barefoot, tending the cows and sheep, while twirling her distaff, for her mother taught her to spin, and later on showed her also how to weave and embroider. While teaching these useful arts to her children, the good mother often related Bible stories, and tales of saints and martyrs, until it seemed to Joan as if she knew all these good people very well. The village folk, also, often told their children fairy tales, and there was one big oak tree, near Joan's home, known for miles around as the fairies' tree, because the elves were supposed to dance beneath its shade on Midsummer's Eve.

Joan's village, like many other places in France, was a bone of contention between the Burgundians and Armagnacs. Once, at least, the little girl had to flee with her parents, finding on her return home that the enemy had done great damage to their humble possessions. When Joan was about thirteen years of age, she was favored by a first vision: as she was working in the garden, she suddenly saw a bright light and heard a sweet voice bidding her be good and go often to church. Joan did not tell of this vision till long afterwards, but she obeyed the voice, and was so good and pious that visions came to her more and more frequently. In time, she became sufficiently accustomed to them to glance in the direction of the

light, where she saw — or imagined she saw — radiant forms. These, she perceived, were angels, and St. Michael, St. Margaret, and St. Catherine, in particular, often came thereafter and spoke gently to her.

Painting by Maillart.

Joan's Vision.

The "voices," as Joan herself always called her visions, told her of the sufferings of the poor people in France, and informed her that she was chosen by God to deliver Orleans, and to lead the Dauphin to Rheims to be crowned. But Joan could not believe that she — a poor peasant girl — would ever be able to accomplish what all the king's soldiers had failed to do, so she hesitated a long time, and it was not till she was about eighteen that she finally obeyed the directions she had received, and prepared to fulfill her mission.

Her parents and the village priest thought Joan crazy when she first spoke of her voices, and of the work she was called upon to perform. Her father roughly declared he would rather drown her than allow her to associate with soldiers. Joan, however, insisted she had no choice

but to obey her heavenly guides. Seeing that she could expect no help from her own immediate family, she finally persuaded an uncle to take her to the neighboring castle of Vaucouleurs (vo-coo-lēr′), where, as the voices had stated, she would find an escort to lead her to the king.

The lord of Vaucouleurs at first grimly remarked that Joan ought to be slapped and sent home, but after a time, seeing that the villagers near him believed in her mission, he too began to think that God *might* have sent her. Besides, a prediction had been made that "France would be lost by a Woman and saved by a Maid," and as it was well known that Isabella was a wicked woman, and that the ruin of France was mainly due to her sins, people everywhere longed for the coming of the promised Maid. A message was therefore dispatched to the king, and having obtained his permission to send Joan on to him, the lord of Vaucouleurs gladly supplied an escort to take her to court.

As this little troop had to pass through a wide stretch of country occupied by the enemy, Joan cut off her long hair, donned men's clothes and armor, and, bestriding the horse which the poor people had purchased for her use, she rode off with eight men. Traveling by night, camping in forests by day, avoiding towns and villages, and fording five rivers, Joan and her escort, after eleven days' journey, reached the castle on the Loire (Chinon) where the king was then staying.

The little troop rested at one of the inns in the small town, until the king sent for Joan. Part of the room where they first met still stands, and a monument has been erected in the town in Joan's honor.

LI. ORLEANS AND RHEIMS

CHARLES — the Dauphin, as he was still called, for, as yet, he had not been consecrated — was just then very much depressed, because an army which he had sent to capture some supplies from the English had recently been defeated in the "Battle of the Herrings." Besides, the king had so little money, that even his shoemaker refused to give him credit for a pair of new boots! He was also doubtful whether the rumors which he had heard might not be true, and thought that if he were not the late king's son, he really had no right to the throne; still, he did not dare express this doubt to any one, but brooded over it constantly in secret.

The reports concerning Joan had awakened the curiosity of the whole court, so Charles made up his mind to subject the girl to a test which would immediately reveal whether she were a fraud or not. He therefore placed one of his courtiers, magnificently attired, in a conspicuous position, and hid himself among the throng of spectators, whence he watched to see what Joan would do. To the amazement of all present, the peasant girl, instead of doing homage to the gorgeously clad courtier seated on the throne, glanced eagerly around her, and singling out the king, — whom she had never seen, — bent the knee before him! Then she informed him gravely that she had been sent to relieve Orleans, and to lead him to Rheims, then still in the hands of the foe.

This first test did not, however, entirely satisfy the king, but when Joan informed him privately that her voices declared he was rightful heir to the throne, and when a

council of priests, after examining the Maid, decided that she was a good girl and a true Christian, and could not therefore have been sent by Satan, he made up his mind to accept the services she offered.

By her orders, a white satin standard was made, a sword with five crosses was discovered buried in a neighboring church, and an army was prepared to march on to Orleans. But Joan was so good and pious that she insisted that the men should pray night and morning, confess their sins, hear mass, and receive the sacrament before going into battle.

Some of the soldiers greatly objected to this, among others General La Hire (heer), who, the story runs, when asked to say an original prayer, since he did not know any by heart, roughly expressed his sentiments as follows: "Lord God, — Do unto La Hire to-day as La Hire would do unto you, if he were Lord God and you were La Hire. Amen." Joan also forbade all swearing among the troops, but La Hire, who could not entirely refrain from strong language, was allowed to swear "by my stick" (of command) when he felt that he must enforce his words by some strong expression.

At last all the preparations were completed, and the army set out to relieve Orleans. Joan had decreed that it should march right through the enemy's lines, but the generals, fearing such an undertaking, and taking a mean advantage of her lack of geographical knowledge, led the force along the southern shore of the Loire River.

When they came opposite Orleans, therefore, the river lay between them and the city, and there were not boats enough to convey the troops across the water! So Joan

sent the army back, with orders to cross at the nearest bridge and return along the other shore, while she and a small troop entered the city. She promised to make a sally to escort the army safely through the enemy's lines, whenever it appeared.

Orleans, then on the verge of famine and despair, joyfully welcomed the Maid with her convoy of provision

Painting by Lenepveu.

Joan entering Orleans.

boats, and hailed with rapture her promise of further aid. It was through a crowd almost delirious with joy that Joan made her way to the house where she was to lodge. A few days later she sallied forth and marched unharmed through the enemy's lines to escort the relieving forces back to the city.

This first success was soon followed by others. In spite

of all opposition, Joan led out her troops, took one fort after another, and finally drove the English away, thus raising the siege of Orleans, as she had promised.

The Maid next joined the king and urged him to march on to Rheims, promising that the cities on the way thither would open their gates at his approach. Thus encouraged, Charles VII. began what turned out to be a triumphal march, through a land which gladly threw off the English yoke, and without striking a blow arrived at Rheims, where he was duly crowned and anointed.

Joan was present at the coronation, in full armor, and bearing her banner. When the ceremony was over, the king bade her ask any reward she wished for her services; and she unselfishly requested that her native village of Domremy should henceforth be freed from taxes, and that she might be allowed to return to her humble home.

The first part of her request was readily granted, and Domremy was free from taxation until the Revolution (1792). Thus for nearly four hundred years "the Maid of Orleans" — as Joan was now almost exclusively called — appeared on the tax lists opposite the name of her native village, instead of the sum which it would otherwise have been obliged to pay.

But when it came to the second item, the king, in spite of her entreaties and tears, insisted that her mission was not yet finished, and that she must help him drive the English entirely out of the country. Although reluctantly, Joan consented at last to remain; but she urged Charles repeatedly to be up and doing, as the right moment had come to act. You see, now that for the first time all loyal Frenchmen believed Charles VII. divinely appointed

to rule France, plenty of men and money were placed at his disposal. But instead of fighting, the dilatory king signed a truce with the new Duke of Burgundy (Philip the Good)—an ally of the English—and continued to pass the greater part of his time in idleness, lavishing much money on his favorite, Agnes Sorel'.

LII. JOAN'S CAPTIVITY AND MARTYRDOM

JOAN, who was meantime busy drilling and disciplining her army, finally prevailed upon the king to allow her to seize certain cities, and even to march on to Paris. There, had she been loyally seconded, the Maid would have taken the city by assault; but as she was wounded in the first engagement, the generals, taking advantage of her helplessness, sounded a retreat and withdrew, just when victory was within their grasp!

In obedience to a vow, Joan now hung her armor above the altar at St. Denis, and reluctantly followed the king to Bourges, where another period of idleness was imposed upon her restive spirit. Still, as soon as she was allowed to fight again, she did so with her usual bravery and success, gaining more cities, taking prisoners, and winning battles. But all this time she was sorely depressed, for her voices kept warning her that she would fall into the hands of the enemy "before midsummer."

In spite of this premonition of evil, Joan continued her work bravely, spending all her leisure time in prayer and in works of charity. Then, hearing that a small city (Compiègne), which had surrendered to the king, was

sorely beset by Burgundians, she hastened thither to succor the inhabitants (1430). While here, she was separated from the bulk of her troops one day, during a sortie, and the soldiers, intent only upon their own safety, actually closed the city gates almost in her face. Although Joan vainly tried to cut her way through the foe, so as to reach another gate or town, she was soon torn down from her horse by the long coat which she wore over her armor, and thus was made captive.

The soldier who took her sold her immediately to the Burgundians, from whose custody she once made a mad attempt to escape. In doing this Joan fell to the bottom of a sixty-foot tower, where she was picked up stunned, but otherwise unharmed. But she was thrust back into prison and closely guarded, until her captors, in sore need of money, arranged to sell her to the English, into whose keeping she passed after six months of close detention.

The English, having secured Joan at last, were determined to destroy her influence in France, by proving that she was inspired by Satan and not by God, as she always claimed. To compass this base purpose they collected at Rouen a large jury of men, all pledged to find her guilty, and began one of the most iniquitous trials in history.

Although she was pitted against no less than sixty-three learned and unscrupulous judges, each and all of whom brought their knowledge and skill to bear so as to convict Joan of impiety, immorality, and witchcraft, this trial, which lasted many weeks, resulted in proving Joan absolutely innocent of all the serious charges brought against her. Besides, her replies to the questions make clear the purity and unselfishness of her character, her trust

in God, and her charity toward all men, — virtuous traits which she showed during the whole of her short life.

The worst charge proved against her was that she had worn men's garments, and had persistently refused to lay them aside! Still, she now consented to do so, provided she were put in another prison and guarded by women only. The judges, thereupon, read a brief paper, stating that she would submit to the Church, and bade her — since she could neither read nor write — sign it with a cross.

Joan complied, little suspecting that instead of the paper read aloud in her presence, these wicked judges had substituted another, in which she acknowledged that she was false and bad in every way. This document duly signed, Joan put on women's garments, only to be led back to the self-same prison, where she was constantly guarded by brutal men!

One day, when she was in bed, these rough keepers took away her woman's clothes, and laid the old male apparel within her reach. Having no choice save to don these garments, or to appear unclothed before her jailers, Joan naturally put on men's clothes. She had no sooner done so, however, than the cruel Bishop of Beauvais (bō-vĕ′) — who had been her main persecutor — appeared in her prison, telling her that, as she had failed to keep her promise, she would now be tried again. But the second trial proved even more of a mockery than the first, and poor Joan was condemned to be burned at the stake, as a heretic and witch.

The courage which the Maid of Orleans had shown all through her career now forsook her for a brief space of time, and she loudly wailed: "Ah! I had rather be be-

headed seven times than burned. I appeal to God against all these great wrongs they do me!"

But, condemned to immediate death, Joan, clad in a long white garment, was chained to a stake erected on the public square of Rouen, where all the people eagerly assembled to see "the witch" burned and to taunt and torment her to the very end.

Painting by Lenepveu.

Joan's Martyrdom.

One priest, however, taking pity on her, brought a cross from a neighboring church, mounted the pyre with her, and left her only when the flames began to rise and she unselfishly bade him think of his own safety. Her last words were full of faith in God and of pity for France, and never once did she utter one word of blame against the king whom she had served so loyally, but who throughout her long captivity and trial made no attempt either to ransom or to rescue her.

Even when the flames rose around her, Joan still insisted that her "voices" came from God, and called upon her favorite saints, Michael, Catherine, and Margaret, to help her. An English soldier, who had vowed to help burn "the witch," threw a fagot of wood on the flames, just as Joan loudly cried, "Jesus! Mary!" before her spirit fled. This soldier, startled and awestruck, declared ever after that he had seen a dove rise up from the pyre and wing its way to heaven, adding that he knew this dove was the pure spirit of the martyred maid!

Most of the spectators left the scene of torture with the conviction that Joan was a martyr, and even the English governor exclaimed in awestruck tones: "We are all lost, for we have burned a saint!"

By order of the judges, Joan's ashes were immediately cast into the Seine, but the spot where she was burned is now marked by a monument in her honor, as are many other noted places in France. The English soon found that Joan the martyr could do them even more harm than Joan at the head of an army, for, as she had predicted at the stake, they were finally driven out of France. At the end of the war they retained nothing but the city of Calais, after having been masters of most of the kingdom.

More than twenty years after Joan's death, Charles VII., seeing it would be to his advantage to have Joan's memory cleared, had her tried over again, and freed from all former disgrace. Ever since then the Maid of Orleans has been honored in France as a heroine and saint, although, strange to relate, her name did not figure as such on the calendar until 1909.

Above the door of the humble house where Joan was

born can still be seen a small statue of the Maid in armor, and whenever troops file past, every soldier gravely salutes the brave girl who rescued France from the enemy, and who died a martyr at nineteen years of age!

The story of Joan is a favorite theme for playwrights, historians, poets, painters, and sculptors; and many literary and artistic masterpieces commemorate her life and death. In the Pantheon in Paris, for instance, there are a series of beautiful frescoes, which give a wonderful idea of the achievements of the untutored peasant girl of Domremy, who, by singleness of purpose and implicit obedience to her mysterious voices, accomplished what all the French generals and armies could not compass, —the ejection of the English from France, thus really ending the terrible Hundred Years' War.

LIII. CHARLES'S SUCCESSES

WHEN Joan breathed her last at Rouen in 1431, the English, still masters of Normandy, had already begun to be disliked there on account of the heavy taxes they kept imposing to pay for the long war. Besides, the Duke of Burgundy now began to quarrel with the English general; so in 1435, by the treaty of Arras', he became reconciled to the French king, whom he now proceeded to help against the English, his former allies.

It was shortly after this reconciliation that the infamous Isabella of Bavaria died. She was buried at St. Denis with no more ado than if she had been a common woman, although all her lifetime she had delighted in pomp and dress.

Two years later Charles VII. entered Paris for the first time as its king (1437), only to find the city so waste and desolate that grass grew in some of the streets, and wolves ranged through them at night. This sight seems to have roused the king at last from his lethargy, for he now ceased to lavish all his time, attention, and money on his pleasures, and proceeded to govern with wisdom. Indeed, the end of his reign proved as beneficial to France as the beginning had been disastrous. He was greatly helped in his wise reforms by a merchant named Jacques Cœur (zhäk kẽr), who had grown very rich by trading with the East, and who assisted the king not only by his advice, but also with his money whenever pressing need arose.

Charles VII., who, as we have seen, proved so ungrateful towards Joan of Arc, was equally so in regard to this merchant. He not only believed false and slanderous reports about him, but unjustly deprived him of all means to prove his innocence, and finally banished him from France, after subjecting him to all manner of humiliations. Among the articles of property confiscated from him was a beautiful building in Bourges (still known as the House of Jacques Cœur), a superb example of the architecture of the day, and of the artistic taste of the owner.

With sufficient funds, a permanent army, — which he was the first to organize, — and a loyal people, Charles managed to end successfully the weary Hundred Years' War (1453), after having conquered Normandy and Guienne, the last provinces to be held by the enemy. Thus, as Joan had predicted, the English were driven out of France, which they were never again to claim as their own,

although they retained possession of the city of Calais for some time longer.

This epoch had also been a troublesome one for the Church, as difficulties had arisen, and for more than three-score years there had been two great religious parties and part of the time two rival Popes. The same year that saw Joan's trial and death witnessed the convocation of a council at Basel (bä′zel), where an attempt was made to settle these religious disputes. Charles, who after Joan's death became quite noted as an administrator, adopted all those measures of this council which could result to his advantage, and, by what is known as the Pragmatic Sanction, secured the royal privilege of nominating candidates to the French sees, a privilege which in the hands of unscrupulous successors was responsible for many misfortunes in the Church of France.

It was during the reign of Charles VII. that the art of printing was discovered (about 1450), and that Constantinople was taken by the Turks (1453), thus causing a great scattering of manuscript libraries and learned men, which helped greatly to further civilization and progress throughout the Western world.

Charles not only made a complete collection of all the old laws of France, but arranged that Parliaments should be instituted both at Toulouse and Greno′ble, so that Frenchmen in the south should have courts near at hand for the settlement of their disputes.

Charles VII. was to be duly punished for the ingratitude he showed to those who served him, by the unfilial conduct of his son, the Dauphin Louis. Not only did this prince join the nobles when they rebelled against the king's re-

forms in 1440, but he also headed a new revolt fifteen years later. Then fearing his father's just anger, Louis sought refuge in Burgundy, with the old enemy of his race, Duke Philip the Good.

Charles VII., who had twice succeeded in putting down serious rebellions, — thus showing the lords and people that he was truly master of his realm, — finally fell seriously ill. In his weakness, he imagined that his illness was due to an attempt on his son's part to poison him, so refusing all food, he died miserably, having reigned thirty-nine eventful years. During the first few years, as we have seen, he nearly lost the realm of his ancestors, but then he regained it slowly but surely, for Charles "the Victorious" was also "the Well-served," having been ably aided by true patriots like Joan of Arc, Dunois (dü-nwä′) La Hire, and Jacques Cœur, to mention only a few of the great names of his period.

LIV. THE CRAFTY KING LOUIS XI.

WHEN Charles VII. died, the rebellious Louis was still staying at the court of Burgundy, so he naturally insisted that the duke accompany him to Rheims to see him crowned. There, the new monarch, Louis XI., made all manner of fine promises to his former host, — promises which he never kept, for while this king was very lavish of them, he was always too mean to fulfill any which he could evade. Indeed, this king was a decidedly peculiar man, entirely devoid of heart or conscience, but very clever, and fully determined to make his authority

absolute. A great historian of his time (Comines) says: "Of all the princes that I ever knew, the wisest and the most dexterous to extricate himself out of any danger or difficulty in time of adversity was our master, King Louis XI." Because this king is utterly unlike all the monarchs before and after him, he is a marked character in history, and, as he succeeded in many of his undertakings, his is a very important reign in the history of France.

Louis XI.

This new king, who was a great hypocrite, affected extreme piety and simplicity, went about meanly clad, and ruled mostly by trickery. His favorite saying was that "he who does not know how to dissimulate does not know how to reign." He was secretive to the point that he once declared, "If I thought my own cap knew my secrets, I would throw it into the fire." This cap or hat, by the way, was a peculiar head covering of his, with leaden images of saints fastened all around the band. Louis XI., we are told, was wont to kiss and fondle these images, kneeling down before them to say his prayers, and begging their pardon whenever he had done anything specially outrageous.

Like his father, he was most ungrateful, dismissing or forgetting people as soon as he no longer needed their services. His physician, as clever and unscrupulous as he, being aware of this peculiarity, — as well as of the king's superstition and fear of death, — once remarked to him: "I know well that sometime or other you will dismiss me from court, as you have done the rest: but be sure (and he confirmed it with a great oath) that you shall not live eight days after you do so!" It was by this means that the crafty doctor retained his position as long as the king lived.

Here is another story illustrating Louis's extreme dread of death. It seems that, being so superstitious, he never failed to consult all the astrologers he could, although he sometimes amused himself by making their predictions fail if it lay in his power to do so. An astrologer once came to court and predicted things which so enraged the king that he angrily resolved to put this man to death. In his hypocritical way, however, he slyly remarked: "You pretend to be very clever, and to be able to foretell the fate of others. Now, tell me your own fate and how much longer you have to live."

The astrologer, perceiving his design, cleverly replied: "I shall die just three days before your Majesty." This shrewd answer actually saved the man's life, for after such a prediction the king was very careful not to do anything which, by shortening the astrologer's days, might perchance hasten his own end.

Louis XI.'s character was such that he could have no real friends and won no great affection, not even from his wife and children. He was married twice, his first wife dying before he came to the throne. He was so mistrust-

ful of his second wife that she seldom occupied the same palace or town as he, and he spent very little time in her company. But as the queen was his opposite in almost every respect, it must have been a great relief for her to see as little as possible of her heartless spouse.

The king's eldest daughter, the Lady of Beaujeu (bō-zhē′), was as clever, cool, and calculating as he. The second, Joan, a gentle, deformed creature, was given in marriage to the Duke of Orleans, a dashing young nobleman, who, we are told, never loved this spouse, neglected her shamefully, and as soon as it was in his power to do so, gladly obtained a divorce from her. The king's third and last child, and only son, was the sickly, rather deformed Dauphin Charles, whose presence his father could not abide, partly because it irritated him to see his heir so feeble in body and mind, but mainly because the thought that he must die some day, and that this youth would succeed him, was simply unendurable. Instead of doing his best to strengthen his son bodily and mentally, Louis XI. neglected him in every way. As a result, the Dauphin was so poorly educated that he scarcely knew how to read or write, and his head was filled with the romances read aloud to amuse him, instead of the knowledge which would have enabled him to become a good king.

LV. BEGINNING OF LOUIS XI.'S REIGN

THE first years of Louis XI's reign were far from prosperous, for when he tried to put down the nobles and rule supreme, they openly rebelled against him, form-

ing what is known as the League of the Public Weal. But although thus opposed by nearly all the aristocracy, Louis intrigued cleverly against them. He bribed some of the nobles to side with him, coaxed others to be neutral, and managed to intimidate the rest. His methods, which were always sly and underhand, show that he was an adept at *kingcraft*, while they won for him the curious surname of "the universal spider."

Still, although Louis avoided open conflict as much as possible, he was no coward, for he boldly took the field against the foes whom he could neither bribe nor frighten. Once, quite near Paris an indecisive battle was fought, mainly against his former friends, the Burgundians. Shortly after this encounter, the king, ever ready to make concessions in words and on paper, signed a treaty with the rebellious nobles (1465), and henceforth, profiting by the experience he had gained, proceeded more cautiously but none the less surely to effect the reforms he had planned.

During most of his reign, his main foe and rival was Charles the Bold, the fourth duke of the second house of Burgundy, who, owning all Burgundy and the main part of what is now Belgium and Holland, dreamed of forming a middle kingdom extending from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, by purchasing or conquering the estates necessary to round out his own. As he was already master of the richest towns in Europe (Dijon, Liége, Ghent, Bruges, etc.), and as his wealth was greater than that of any other sovereign of his time, Charles felt confident of ultimately attaining his goal. No sooner, therefore, had his father (Philip the Good) passed away than he began

to carry out these ambitious plans, by marrying a sister of the King of England so as to secure an important alliance.

Of course, so clever a monarch as Louis XI. soon became aware of Charles the Bold's ambitious schemes, and naturally brought all his sagacity into play to outwit the duke, who was already far too powerful a vassal to suit him. The king foresaw that if the duke should extend his territories in an unbroken line from sea to sea, and assume the regal title, he would soon outshine and overpower even a King of France.

Louis XI.'s chief counselor, Cardinal La Balue′, advised him to secure his ends by diplomacy, and suggested that he meet the duke at Péronne (pā-rōn′). So the King of France betook himself thither, with a small escort; but the negotiations thus begun were not concluded as speedily as Louis had hoped. Fearing lest they might not turn out in the end as he wished, Louis had meantime sent secret agents to Liége (le-āzh′), to bribe the inhabitants of that rich merchant city to rebel against their lord, the Duke of Burgundy.

Unfortunately, the rebellion broke out before the interview at Péronne was concluded, and the duke, suddenly discovering the treacherous part Louis had played, was greatly enraged. It seemed at first as if he would either kill or imprison for life the foe who had so imprudently ventured into his clutches. Louis, however, perceiving the danger, was pliant and conciliatory, readily promised to sign a humiliating treaty, and even proposed to march northward with Charles to subdue Liége; so that a temporary peace was patched up between them.

As soon as it was concluded, king and duke marched in concert upon Liége, and took the city after eight days' siege. Imagine how indignant the inhabitants were when they discovered that the very man who had encouraged them to revolt was now fighting against them! When it was all over, and the French king was safe once more within his own boundaries, he showed how keenly he felt his humiliation, it is said, by publishing an edict that all parrots, magpies, etc., be confiscated or slain, whose vocabulary included the word "Péronne," or any allusion to the fact that on this occasion the "biter had been bitten."

Next, he assembled the States-General at Tours (1470), to make them cancel the treaty he had signed under compulsion at Péronne. Then, to avenge himself upon La Balue for the bad advice he had given, the king had him shut up in a narrow iron cage, a species of torture which La Balue himself had devised for the punishment of criminals.

It was at this juncture that Louis's brother, who had sided with the League and with the Duke of Burgundy, suddenly died, an event which was very pleasing to the king, who now cheerfully annexed this brother's province of Guienne to the crown lands. But while he was thus adding to his territories, and releasing himself from inconvenient pledges, his rival, the Duke of Burgundy, marched southward with an army, and proceeded to besiege Beauvais, to punish Louis for his treachery.

This town resisted heroically, and when the duke tried to storm the walls, the women, led by a heroine named Jeanne Hachette (zhän ä-shĕt′), bravely defended the ramparts, so that they succeeded in repelling the powerful foe.

Ever since this siege, women have been given the precedence in processions at Beauvais, in public recognition for their services on this occasion. Charles the Bold, thus

Painting by Maillart.

The Women defending Beauvais.

obliged to retreat, next tried to join the Duke of Brittany, but Louis cleverly won over the latter, and made a treaty with the King of England, thereby outwitting his rival at every turn.

LVI. ACHIEVEMENTS OF LOUIS XI.

DISAPPOINTED in his plans to extend his territory on the French side, the Duke of Burgundy now fancied he might prove more successful in Germany, hoping also to obtain the title of king from the Emperor, to whom he did homage for part of his estates. But there, too, Charles the Bold was to fail. One of his governors having exasperated some Swiss people intrusted to his care, they rose in rebellion, — secretly encouraged and aided by funds supplied by Louis XI. Determined to subdue these rebels, the Duke of Burgundy set out with a brilliant army, only to be twice defeated with great loss by determined peasants (first at Granson and then at Morat, 1476).

These two battles mark the time when the Swiss threw off forever the Burgundian yoke; and they were most disastrous to the duke, who, besides losing many thousands of men, lost also immense treasures. Still, the plunder of his rich camp was of small benefit to the victors, who sold gold and silver plate for a few pence, — deeming it only pewter and copper, — and who valued some of the finest jewels in Christendom at only a few francs.

The humiliation of such defeats at the hands of untrained rustics almost drove the proud Duke of Burgundy insane. In his reckless rage he next attacked the Duke of Lorraine with only a handful of men, but there again came into contact with the Swiss, now allies of his foe. Thus the battle of Nan'cy (1477) was lost, too, and when all was over, the duke's corpse was discovered by one of his servants, half caught in the ice of a frozen stream.

Hearing that his great rival and foe, Charles the Bold,

was dead, Louis XI. immediately seized Burgundy and the duke's only daughter, Mary, a girl of about twenty. He then declared that Burgundy could be inherited only by males, although the young duchess claimed it as well as Flanders. Then, for a short time, hoping to keep both Burgundy and Flanders in the family, the crafty Louis detained the young Duchess Mary in France, meanwhile trying to win her consent to marry his sickly son, then only a little boy. But the absurdity of such a marriage was too great, so Louis was at last obliged to give up the plan, and to allow the duchess to go to Flanders, where the burghers soon induced her to marry Maximil'ian, son of the Emperor.

The story of Charles the Bold's death, of Louis's crafty schemes to secure both Burgundy and Flanders, and of Mary's escape from the French court, is told in a thrilling way in Sir Walter Scott's *Quentin Durward* and in his *Anne of Geierstein*, (ḡī'er-stīn), where you will get the best idea of Louis XI.'s character, of his mode of living and surroundings, and of the famous people of his time.

The heiress of Burgundy having married a German prince, Louis hastened to confiscate all her estates in France; but what was left of her dowry proved enough to make her husband very wealthy. Maximilian, however, always claimed that Burgundy ought to be restored to his wife, and even invaded France and fought the battle of Guinegate (ḡeen-gät', 1479) in hopes of forcing Louis XI. to relinquish all claim upon it. But Maximilian was no match for the astute French monarch, who not only retained possession of Burgundy, but when Mary of Burgundy died, leaving two young children, arranged that her little daughter, aged three, should be brought up at the

French court as the future bride of his son, the Dauphin. This arrangement ended for some time the dispute in regard to the possession of Burgundy, which, however, was to be renewed later on.

Louis XI., "the wisest king that had ever borne rule in France, and the best obeyed," proved a great patron of letters, and welcomed to France many of the learned men who had escaped from Constantinople. He also had several printing presses established in his realm, and is known as the founder of the post office, for he arranged that couriers should carry dispatches from end to end of the country, with hitherto unknown speed and safety, by means of relays at stated intervals.

Louis XI. is the founder of the order of St. Michael, which he instituted to offset the Burgundian order of the Golden Fleece, devised by Philip the Good, father of Charles the Bold, as a token of great distinction.

The crown lands were greatly extended under Louis's wise rule. By conquest, purchase, and inheritance he added no less than eleven provinces to the royal domain, and, as we have seen, he further extended the royal power by holding the aristocracy in proper subjection.

But Louis XI., who reached his ends so cleverly, was anything but a happy man. He was so suspicious that he trusted no one. Constantly expecting the attack of some enemy, he surrounded himself with walls, traps, and all manner of safeguards, and lived more like a crazy prisoner than like a rational human being.

His intimates were his hangman, whom he called his "gossip," his barber, and several other people of low extraction and anything but noble character. For miles

around the castles he occupied, one saw gallows with corpses swinging, pits, traps, and various devices for torture. His favorite mode of punishment was to lock a prisoner in an iron cage, so small that a man could neither stand upright in it, nor stretch out full length when lying down. Victims in these cages were often exposed at the top of some tower to all the rigors of wind and weather. The wretched inventor of this mode of torture, was himself, as we have seen, condemned to a ten years' trial of it; for Louis spared neither his foes nor his so-called friends.

Scarcely had the quarrel about Burgundy been settled, when the king, who had always been sickly, became seriously ill. As the fear of death now haunted him night and day, he sent to Italy for Francis of Paul, and implored this holy man to cure him, or at least to intercede with heaven so that his life might be prolonged, promising all manner of rewards in exchange for such a service.

But the holy man assured the king that he had no supernatural powers at all, and seriously advised him to make his peace with God, as his end was evidently very near. Convinced at last that he must die before long, Louis set his affairs in order, gave excellent advice to his son, and after showing such regret as he was capable of feeling for the many unjust and criminal deeds he had done, peacefully passed away.

LVII. CHARLES VIII.

THE heir to the crown, known in history as Charles VIII., was, as we have seen, puny in body and weak in intellect. His education had been so neglected that al-

though thirteen years of age he was still a mere puppet in the hands of the nobles. But Louis XI. had been so feared and hated, that his death was hailed as a great relief by the whole nation. The courtiers began by avenging some of their past injuries in ill-treating the favorites of the deceased monarch, one of whom was put to death, another imprisoned in one of the famous iron cages, and the doctor banished, after being obliged to surrender a large part of the fortune he had wrung from his late master.

The death of Louis XI. was also the signal for Maximilian to claim Burgundy once more, while Fer'dinand of Spain demanded the restoration of two provinces which he had ceded to France. The clergy, the nobles, and the peasants each had requests to make in the great meeting of the States-General at Tours (1484); and it was only by skillful management that Anne of Beaujeu, the late king's eldest daughter, maintained her position as regent for her young brother. Anne was nearly as clever as her father, who once said of her, "She is the least foolish woman in the world, for there is no such a thing as a wise one!" Although she was only twenty-two, her ascendency and authority proved such that she was known at court as "Madame la Grande," a title which she richly earned during her five or more years of regency.

Because of the state of mind of the aristocracy, and the miserable condition of the peasantry, — many of whom were obliged to draw their own plows because they were too poor to own or feed horses or oxen, — it required all her dexterity to manage the complicated affairs of the realm. Two revolts of the nobles were headed by her brother-in-law, the Duke of Orleans, and backed by Maximilian and

Ferdinand. They resulted in the defeat and imprisonment of the Duke of Orleans, and in the triumph of the regent, who, pursuing her father's policy of extending the realm as much as possible, next planned to gain Brittany, which the death of the Duke of Brittany had left to a daughter.

Anne of Brittany.

The heiress of Brittany, Anne, was a spirited, well-educated damsel, who, although only fourteen, was already sought in marriage by many suitors, all, of course, anxious to become owners of her vast estates. The duchess, it is said, had seen the Duke of Orleans, and had been much impressed by this gay cavalier, although he was already married to the sickly and deformed sister of the king. At any rate, she was in no hurry to marry; but such was the eagerness of her suitors to gain possession of her rich inheritance, that some of them even prepared to carry her off by force.

In her quandary, this young heiress therefore accepted the proposals of Maximilian, who, having already gained so much by his first marriage with Mary of Burgundy, was not at all loath to acquire still more, by taking as second wife the fair young Duchess of Brittany. Unfor-

tunately, however, Maximilian was too busy just then with affairs in a remote part of his realm to do his wooing in person; so, when the duchess and her councilors accepted his proposals, he sent a German lord to act as his proxy in the marriage ceremony. Anne did not like this lord's German manners; and as Maximilian showed no anxiety to join her after the marriage, but left her exposed to all the trials and dangers of her position, just resentment was kindled in Anne's breast.

The French king, having meantime undertaken to reign by himself, first set his brother-in-law, the Duke of Orleans, free, and then, influenced by his ambitious sister, began to woo Anne of Brittany, whose nominal marriage to Maximilian was afterward annulled by the Pope. Charles VIII., who was very romantic, actually sought this lady in the guise of a pilgrim, to prevail upon her to favor his suit. He had also taken the precaution to send an army, which besieged the town where Anne was.

Yielding to the doubly fervent suit of the king, Anne was betrothed to him three days later, — and the little daughter of Maximilian, who was being educated at court to become the king's bride, was sent home! Anne of Brittany not only married the king, but promised that if Charles died before her, and they had no children, she would marry his successor, or the heir to the throne, — a provision which would prevent Brittany's ever passing into the hands of a foreigner.

Charles next made treaties with Ferdinand of Spain and Maximilian of Germany, conceding to them four of the provinces his father had won. He did this to secure the peace he needed while preparing to carry out the dream

of his life; for, nourished as he had been on romances of chivalry, he longed to distinguish himself by brilliant conquests abroad. His plan was to make good his claims to Naples, — bequeathed by a relative, — and after having become master of all Italy, to conquer Constantinople and Palestine, thus rivaling Cæsar and Alexander!

In 1494, therefore, the first Italian expedition set out with the French king at its head, and such brave men in the ranks as Bayard (bà-yàr′), — universally known as "the knight without fear and without reproach" (*chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*). As the Italian states were discontented just then, the French expedition resembled a triumphal progress, for town after town opened its gates to welcome Charles as a deliverer. Even Flor′ence — then under the influence of Savonaro′la's religious reforms — hailed the French with delight. In five months' time, Charles entered Naples, "where one would have thought he was the founder of the city," such was the joyful reception given him!

As the ruler of this kingdom had fled at his approach, Charles took immediate possession, fancying that all his troubles were over. But, in spite of his first great successes, this Italian campaign was doomed to be an utter failure, for the French king himself had little idea of good government, and the rulers he appointed had even less. It soon came to pass, therefore, that the very cities which so gladly hailed Charles, were soon eager to renounce their brief allegiance to him.

The king's homeward journey, therefore, instead of being a triumphal march like his advance, gradually turned into a retreat before a powerful and indignant Italian

League. In fact, when Charles arrived at Forno'vo, he had to wage a terrible battle against it; but here he showed great personal bravery, and cleverly extricated his army from peril (1495).

Charles's situation, however, in the heart of an enemy's country, was so precarious that he was thankful to recross the Alps, virtually surrendering all his recent conquests. In fact, a few months later, the former King of Naples could reënter his realm, which turned traitor a second time, and basely deserted the unpopular French governor.

The sole result, therefore, of Charles VIII.'s romantic expedition into Italy, was a thirst for adventure and conquest which was to cost France dear, besides almost ruining Italy, in the course of what are known as the Italian Wars, which extended from 1494 to 1544.

Having returned from Italy much poorer in men and money, Charles VIII. now seemed to repent of his rash venture. He was just beginning to turn his mind to home reforms, which promised great things for the country, when he was cut short by apoplexy at the age of twenty-eight. His last words were, "I hope never to commit another willful sin as long as I live."

The reign of Charles VIII., comparatively unimportant, nevertheless covers an eventful period in the world's history, for it was while he occupied the throne of France that Christopher Columbus crossed the Atlantic, that Cabot landed on the North American mainland, and that Vasco da Gä'ma discovered the sea route to India by way of the Cape of Good Hope. These discoveries—changing as they did the whole aspect of the world's affairs and

giving a new impetus to commerce — are therefore considered by some historians as the point where the Middle Ages end, and the Modern Times begin, especially the movement called the Renaissance (rē-nĕ-säNss′), or New Birth of Science and Literature.

LVIII. SECOND ITALIAN WAR

CHARLES VIII.'s sons having all died in infancy, he was succeeded by his cousin and brother-in-law, Louis, Duke of Orleans, the first and only monarch of the Valois-Orleans branch. This Louis had married the second daughter of Louis XI., but the marriage was now annulled, and the new king proceeded at once to woo and wed Anne of Brittany, the twenty-one-year-old widow of his predecessor.

Meantime, Anne had quietly withdrawn to her estates, where, to show her grief, she donned black garments, although widowed French queens had hitherto always worn white in token of mourning, and were hence popularly known as the White Queens (*les Reines Blanches*).

Tradition relates that Louis XII. had been in love with Anne previous to her marriage with Charles VIII., and gladly took advantage of her agreement to marry her husband's successor, — should Charles VIII. die without children. He was also glad, of course, to reannex Brittany to the crown.

The War in Italy, in which the nobility had eagerly taken part, had cost the lives of so many men, that Louis XII. experienced no opposition from the nobles in

taking possession of the throne, and at his coronation was surrounded mostly by children and foreigners. In fact, the only resistance opposed to him was on the part of the university, which, for eight months, refused to allow him to introduce wise and necessary reforms in its government.

Finding the royal coffers quite empty, at his accession, Louis XII. paid out of his private purse for the funeral of his predecessor. Some of the lords who had opposed him and had helped to imprison him when he rebelled against Charles VIII. (see page 213) were afraid lest he might seize this opportunity to punish them; but he hastened to reassure them by publicly stating, "The King of France does not avenge the injuries of the Duke of Orleans!"—a generous statement for which he is noted. It was not in words only that Louis XII. showed himself magnanimous and conservative, for he displaced none of the former king's servants, but proceeded to govern with a gentleness and wisdom which promised great things for the country.

Two years after coming to the throne, Louis XII. deemed the time ripe to renew the conquest of Italy. Here, besides the right to Naples inherited from his predecessor, he also claimed Milan as heir of his grandmother (see page 364). He began by persuading the Swiss, the Venetians, and the Pope to aid in making war upon the reigning Duke of Milan.

Having collected sufficient means for the campaign,—not by imposing new taxes, but by selling offices,—Louis XII. assembled a large army at Lyons, crossed the Alps, and attacked the Duke of Milan, who, sorely pressed by the Venetians on the other side, was soon obliged to flee. In a twenty days' campaign, Louis thus became

master of the whole duchy, and could enter Milan in triumph (1500).

His quickly achieved conquest was not, however, so easy to retain, for this king, who diminished taxes in France, proved very exacting in Italy. The heavily taxed

Drawing by Du Semane.

Bayard holding the Bridge.

Italians, feeling besides little respect for claims inherited from a woman, soon drove away his governor; but the duchy was promptly conquered by a second French army.

The next move of the French was to secure Naples, which was done with the aid of the Spanish. The conquered territory was divided between the allies, after much disputing; but before long the Spanish seized nearly all of it. When Louis XII. bitterly complained that for the

second time his Spanish allies had tried to cheat him, their monarch impudently retorted, "No, it is the tenth!"

Another French army was sent to the rescue, but the Spanish defeated it at the Garigliano (gä-reel-yä′nō) River. Indeed, the army might have been utterly destroyed if it had not been for the French hero Bayard (bȧ-yȧr′), who, almost single-handed, held the foe at bay at a bridge over the river. There, after accomplishing such feats of valor that the Spanish began to wonder whether they were dealing with a man or with some supernatural creature, this brave knight was taken captive, a calamity which immediately spurred his followers on to rescue and escort him back to their own camp in triumph, loudly proclaiming as they did so, that they had recovered "their true banner of honor!"

LIX. DEATH OF LOUIS XII.

THE French were obliged to retire a second time from southern Italy, and all the vast expenditure of men and money had again been in vain. Discouraged, Louis XII. sought the alliance of Austria, and signed the treaty of Blois (blwä), whereby he pledged his daughter in marriage to the Emperor's grandson Charles, promising to give her as dowry both Brittany and Burgundy. This treaty greatly pleased Anne of Brittany, who foresaw that her daughter would thus sometime rule over most of western Europe; but it greatly alarmed the French people. At the request of the States-General, assembled at Tours (1506), the king retracted this promise, and immediately pledged his daughter's hand instead to his cousin and heir,

Francis of Angoulême (äN-goo-lâm′), thus making sure that Brittany should always form part of France.

It was because Louis XII. thus yielded to the wishes of the people — annulling a treaty which threatened to destroy national unity — that his grateful subjects first called him "Father of the People," a title which he deserved, besides, for the care with which he watched over their interests. In fact, he was frequently taxed with doing too much for them, to which he invariably replied, "A good shepherd cannot fatten his flock too much." When derided, also, on account of the rigid economy he practiced, this monarch once shrewdly remarked, "I had rather make the courtiers laugh on account of my stinginess, than have my people weep on account of my extravagance!"

Louis XII. was ably seconded in all he tried to do in the line of reform by his prime minister (George of Amboise), in whom he had such implicit confidence, that he was in the habit of answering complaints by the words, "Let George manage that,"—an expression which has since become proverbial (*Laissez faire à Georges*).

Although by the treaty of Blois Louis XII. formally renounced all claims to Naples, he maintained his hold upon Milan and Gen′oa, and when the latter city revolted, showed himself quite merciful toward the inhabitants, — a most unusual proceeding in those revengeful days. Then, joining the Pope, the Emperor, and the King of Spain in the League of Cambrai (cäN-brĕ′), he suddenly turned against the former allies, the Venetians, whom he soon defeated (at Agnadello, 1509). But this move proved unwise, for his new friends deserted him before long, and Louis thus found himself forced to send fresh troops

into Italy to defend his possessions there against powerful Venice.

The king's nephew, the gallant young Gaston de Foix (gäs-tôN′ dẽ fwä′), greatly distinguished himself in this war by saving one city and retaking another (Brescia) with Bayard's help. In the final assault of this city, the gallant Bayard, sorely wounded, had to be carried into the house of a widow. She and her daughters tenderly cared for him, and in return a company of his soldiers guarded the house and protected its inmates. Before Bayard left them, he further showed his gratitude for their care by refusing the money they offered as the usual ransom for their lives, and by generously providing for their future safety and welfare.

His wound having healed at last, Bayard hastened on to rejoin his daring young leader at Raven′na, where a terrible battle was fought, and where Gaston is said to have plunged into the fray, crying, "Let him that loves me follow me!" But, although he again won a brilliant victory, it was this time at the cost of his life, his corpse being found on the battlefield, pierced by twenty-two wounds. Bayard, and all the army, mourned this young prince sorely, declaring that there was no telling what he would have accomplished had he not been cut off thus when still a mere boy, for his years scarcely equaled the number of honorable wounds beneath which he succumbed. After the death of this hero, the fortunes of France in Italy waned rapidly, and when the Swiss joined her enemies, Louis soon lost his last hold upon the country.

Meantime, the English allies of the Italians, hoping to create a diversion, invaded France and won a battle (at

Guinegate), derisively known in history as "The Battle of the Spurs," because so many French knights fled on this occasion. Bayard, who took part in this engagement and did not know how to flee, was made prisoner, and so had to be ransomed. But it was mainly because the Swiss were threatening France on the east, and the Spaniards on the south, that the king deemed it proper to make peace.

By dealing separately with his various foes, Louis XII. succeeded in obtaining fairly good terms. He was, however, compelled to relinquish all rights to Italy, and Anne of Brittany having died, to cement peace with the English by marrying Mary Tudor, a young sister of Henry VIII. We are told that this gay young princess consented to marry such an old king, only upon condition that she would, at his death, be allowed to espouse any one she pleased, for she was already deeply enamored with a young nobleman at her brother's court.

When she came to France, a merry damsel, the old French king was obliged to attend so many festivities and to keep such late hours, that his already weak health gave way, and thus Mary soon found herself free to follow her heart's choice. After a very brief period of mourning, therefore, Mary Tudor married her first lover, being twice a bride in the short space of six months. Her romantic story is entertainingly told in a novel entitled, *When Knighthood was in Flower*, which young people generally like to read.

Although Louis XII. married again late in life for political reasons, he was none the less faithful to the memory of Queen Anne of Brittany; for he is said to have begged with his dying breath to be laid in her tomb, one of the

finest to be seen in the Abbey of St. Denis, the royal mausoleum just outside of Paris.

Louis XII. is the first Capetian king whose portrait invariably figures upon his coins. France also dates her first real navy from the reign of this wise king. He was greatly beloved by the people, whose industries he fostered, and whose rights he stanchly upheld. In fact, after he had passed away, his subjects were often heard to sigh, "Would that we were back again to the times of good Louis XII.!"

Statue of Louis XII. at the Château of Blois.

The Italian Wars under Louis XII., disastrous as they were in some respects, proved very advantageous to France in others. The Italian Renaissance had begun nearly a century before, and all manner of new ideas and of works of art were brought to France by the returning warriors. Architects, sculptors, and painters were also imported, the Castle of Amboise (ăn-bwäz′) arose on the Loire, churches and cathedrals were erected

or embellished, and a tremendous impetus was given to all branches of art, science, and literature.

LX. FRANCIS I.

AS Louis XII. left no male descendant, the crown at his death passed on to his next of kin and son-in-law, Francis of Angoulême, known in history as Francis I. A dashing, energetic, handsome youth of twenty-one, loving pleasure, letters, and art, Francis was the very king to charm rich and poor. It is said, "Never was king of France in whom the nobles took such delight!" Nevertheless, Louis XII. wisely foresaw that so brilliant a youth might not prove a wise ruler; for he once shook his head and shrewdly remarked, "This big fellow is going to spoil everything," — a prediction which very nearly came true.

Brought up by an adoring mother, and the constant companion of a talented sister who was equally his slave, Francis was the typical spoiled child, who preferred pleasure to work, and romances of chivalry to any other reading or study. Having thus never been denied anything in boyhood, it is no wonder that he grew up self-indulgent and passionate, and that at his coronation he thoughtlessly squandered all his predecessor's savings in mere revelry.

Having been accustomed to associate with clever and charming women at home, Francis first desired ladies to appear publicly at his court, remarking gallantly, "A court without women is like a year without spring, and a spring without roses!" Still, he was not always so com-

plimentary to the fair sex, for he used to consider women most changeable, and wrote once on a pane of glass in one of his castles: "Women often vary; a man's very foolish to trust them."

Although his queen — Claude of France, daughter of Anne of Brittany — was a quiet and very retiring woman, there were many brilliant ladies at Francis's court. One of the royal favorites was Dian'a of Poitiers, a lady noted for her beautiful complexion which all the other dames envied. Because Diana once informed them that her fine color was due mainly to exercise and plentiful bathing, court ladies began to use more soap and water than had hitherto been their custom; for in those days cleanliness was almost equal to *un*godliness. In fact, Francis I.'s sister is said to have remarked on one occasion, while exhibiting her shapely hands: "Look at these lovely hands of mine; they have not been washed for eight days, yet I will wager they outshine yours!" So, although Diana of Poitiers may have done much harm to this king and to his son, she did considerable good to the human race by inducing French ladies to bathe more frequently.

The new king, eager to distinguish himself and thirsting for adventures and a stage upon which to play a brilliant part, soon decided to renew the war in Italy, where he hoped to retrieve his predecessor's losses. Leaving his mother at the head of affairs at home, therefore, Francis started out bravely to win the glory he coveted in foreign lands.

Instead of following the usual route, Francis scaled the Alps by means of a pass known only to herdsmen and smugglers, through which, after surmounting almost

incredible difficulties and blasting a way for his cannon, he conducted an army down into Italy. This move greatly amazed the Italian general Colon'na, who, on hearing that the French were at his gates, wonderingly exclaimed: "What! Have they flown over the mountains?"

Soon after his arrival in Italy, Francis came face to face with the Swiss mercenaries at Marignano (mä-reen-yä'no, 1515), where a tremendous battle was fought. The king himself took a brilliant part in the fray, and slept on a cannon when nightfall checked this "Battle of Giants." On this battlefield, also, King Francis I. was knighted by Bayard, the sword used on this occasion being laid aside as a priceless relic, never to be drawn again save "against the infidel." On account of this picturesque ceremony, and because of his many chivalric instincts, Francis was often called "the knightly king."

By the brilliant victory of Marignano, Francis recovered possession of Milan, and induced the Swiss to sign a perpetual peace with France, — a treaty which was never broken, and which enabled French kings thereafter to have large bodies of Swiss mercenaries in their service until the outbreak of the Revolution.

The Pope also became an ally of Francis, and although the Concor'dat (papal treaty or agreement, 1516), which replaced the Pragmatic Sanction (see page 200), tried to restrict the king's privilege of naming all bishops and abbots in his realm, French rulers continued to exercise this power. Neither Francis nor his successors, however, were sufficiently careful in their choice of persons to occupy such influential positions.

By this first campaign of Francis I. in Italy, France

gained territory, wealth, and much glory, so the young conqueror returned home, one of the marked men of his age. He brought with him fine paintings by Raph'ael, and statues by Michelan'gelo, as well as hosts of artists to decorate the new buildings which he was planning. Thus the Renaissance, or New Birth of arts and letters, continued to make its way in France, which, at this epoch, could boast of being the foremost power in Europe.

LXI. RIVALRY OF KINGS

FRANCIS was not the only ambitious prince of his time, for Henry VIII. was then monarch of England, and Charles of Austria sole heir to the vast possessions of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, as well as to Austria and the Netherlands. When Emperor Maximilian died, therefore, in 1519, these three young rulers became rival candidates for the imperial crown. The electors awarded it to Charles, — who thus became the Emperor Charles V. Francis had previously said in his chivalric way, "We are two gallants courting the same mistress, and he who fails will have no excuse for ill-temper"; but he changed his mind and became alarmed when he found himself surrounded by the lands of his powerful rival.

In fact, this election influenced European policy for the next hundred and forty years. It determined Francis to begin what is known as the "Struggle for the Balance of Power," because he foresaw that Charles would soon try to become master of all western Europe, and would want to absorb France in the process.

In hopes of securing the aid and alliance of England in his plan to check Austria, Francis arranged a personal interview with Henry VIII., to take place near Calais, which was then under English rule. The two young monarchs, who were equally vain and extravagantly fond of display, met therefore on a plain, since known as the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," because their tents were of this precious tissue, and all their appointments of unequaled luxury and splendor. The nobles in both suites are said to have "carried their mills and castles on their backs," because they heavily mortgaged their possessions so as to appear to brilliant advantage, in what is also known as "the last feudal parade."

Unfortunately, Francis succeeded on this occasion in outshining his guest and rival, not only in costly display, but also in personal strength and agility. Rashly setting aside the extreme formality with which the first interview was conducted, he insisted upon free and easy intercourse, and one day even proposed wrestling bouts and tests of skill, in all of which he came off victor. Now Henry VIII. was quite as vain and spoiled as Francis himself, so did not enjoy being thus eclipsed, and the interview resulted in little save vague promises on the part of Henry, and in bankruptcy for many of the courtiers who had taken a prominent part in the festivities. The famous magnificences of the "Field of the Cloth of Gold" are represented on a picturesque old house in Rouen, where they are still frequently admired by the travelers who pass through this interesting city.

Charles V., wiser or more diplomatic than either of his former rivals for the imperial crown, went to visit Henry

— whose first wife, Catherine, was Charles's aunt — without any fuss at all, and not only avoided hurting the English king's pride, but cleverly won the support of the prime minister Wolsey by promising to help him to become Pope. Thus he succeeded in forming with his uncle a treaty of alliance, whose great aim was to conquer France, dividing its lands between England and Austria.

Instead of there being wars in Italy only, therefore, France was attacked in the north by the Imperialists (the troops of the Emperor Charles V.), but their advance was checked by the brave Bayard (Mézières, 1521). The next year, the French with their Swiss allies were sorely defeated in Italy. Just as Francis was preparing to cross the Alps a second time, to avenge this defeat, he learned that the Constable of Bourbon (boor'bun), one of his chief nobles, had suddenly turned traitor!

The defection of this nobleman, which proved a grievous blow to France, was due mainly to the fact that Bourbon was vain and overambitious. He was proud of his vast estates, part of which he had gained by marriage. But after his wife died, childless, leaving him her property, the king's mother claimed these lands as next of kin. The king favored his mother's claim, and Bourbon forgot, in his resentment, what was due to his country, if not to his king, and basely deserted the French to join Charles V. Henry VIII., who had noticed Bourbon's vanity and ambition at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, had shrewdly remarked to Francis one day, "If I had a subject like that, I would not leave his head very long on his shoulders!" And Francis now had ample cause to regret not having paid heed to that advice.

Nevertheless, a French army was sent to Italy; but it was defeated and Bayard mortally wounded while covering the retreat of his friends. As this "knight without fear and without reproach" lay dying under a tree, gazing devoutly at his sword hilt, — which, being cross-shaped, had been set up before his dim eyes, — the enemy came rushing toward him, full of pity and admiration, and tried to ease his last moments on earth by erecting a tent over his head. Even the traitor Constable of Bourbon drew near to express the pity he felt; but the virtuous knight firmly declined all his offers of assistance, saying: "It is not I, but you, who ought to be pitied. You, who are fighting against your king, your country, and your oath!"

After a few hours of extreme suffering, Bayard passed away, the last words he uttered being "God and my country," which show that to the end he was loyal to both. It is said that he alone was worth a regiment, and he has often been called "the last of the knights." The tidings of his death spread mourning throughout the country, and Francis once remarked with heartfelt regret: "Alas, I have lost a great captain. He carried with him into the grave many of the brightest jewels which might have been added to my crown!"

The memory of this true knight and virtuous Frenchman has always proved an inspiration and example to his countrymen, who have honored him by a fine grave in his birthplace at Grenoble, and who continue to prize his name and noble sayings, among which were the following: "Our deeds must speak for us and claim reward. It is finer to deserve favors without getting them, than to obtain them without being worthy of them."

Having defeated the French in Italy, the Imperialists entered France, with the intention of carrying all before them and sweeping on to Paris; but at Marseilles Bourbon met unexpected resistance. This city held out against his forces for forty days, while even women and children worked with heroic perseverance to strengthen the fortifications as fast as they were weakened.* The brave resistance of Marseilles not only frustrated the plans of the foes, but enabled Francis I. to collect an army and hasten to the rescue of his loyal people. The invaders were driven back into Italy, and Francis quickly followed and captured Milan.

Then, dividing his army into two bands, Francis sent one off to reconquer Naples, and with the other met the Imperialists in the memorable battle of Pavia (pä-vee'ä, 1525). Here the French were greatly outnumbered, and in spite of prodigies of valor on the part of king and army, they experienced a terrible defeat. Francis himself fell into the hands of his foes, and when summoned to surrender to Bourbon, haughtily replied, "Better die than yield to a traitor!" Still, he consented to give up his sword to another officer, and that very evening wrote to inform his mother of the disaster, stating in his letter that "all is lost save honor and life, which we saved!" Tradition has drawn from this letter the time-honored epigram, which you will often hear quoted, "All is lost save honor!" (*tout est perdu fors l'honneur*).

After being detained in Italy for a short time, King Francis was conducted to Madrid', where, instead of being treated with the courtesy and honor which he expected, — and which were his due, — he was locked up in a dungeon,

so dark and unwholesome that he soon became dangerously ill. This severity was used in hopes of forcing him to sign a disgraceful treaty; but when Charles V. suddenly learned that Francis was about to abdicate in favor of his son, and when the prisoner became so ill that there seemed danger lest he should die, a beneficial change was made in his treatment. He was also allowed to see his devoted sister, who came from her kingdom of Navarre on purpose to visit him, and he was granted his first interview with his rival and jailer, Charles V.

It was only after this momentous colloquy that Francis decided to yield to humiliating conditions to recover his freedom. He therefore signed the treaty of Madrid (1526), whereby he relinquished all his rights to Italy, pardoned and reinstated the traitor Bourbon, agreed to give up Flanders, Burgundy, and other territories, pledged himself to marry a sister of Charles V., now that Queen Claude was dead, and surrendered his two sons as hostages.

On the frontier between France and Spain Francis I. was merely allowed time to embrace these children, who were immediately conveyed to Madrid. They were locked up in a prison as dismal as that in which their father had languished, and kept there without means of amusement or education, until it is said they forgot even their native language!

Meanwhile, their selfish father, having reached French soil, sprang on a fine horse and galloped off, exclaiming, "Now I am once more king!"

Although Francis had solemnly sworn to keep his engagements with Charles V., he had no intention of doing so, as you will see.

LXII. ACHIEVEMENTS OF FRANCIS I.

AS soon as the news of Francis's captivity spread abroad, all Europe was deeply moved, for it now seemed as if France were in imminent danger of extinction, and as if Charles V. might realize his great ambition and become sole master of all western Europe. Feeling that England might be the next to suffer, Henry VIII. suddenly decided to desert his former ally Charles V., and to unite forces instead with Francis I., as did various Italian cities also.

Encouraged by the support of these allies, and unwilling to execute a treaty wrung from him by force, Francis induced the Burgundian notables to declare that a King of France had no right to yield territory belonging to the country. This suited Francis exactly, because while he claimed to be chivalrous in the extreme, he never felt any scruples about breaking promises when he found it expedient to do so. But his refusal to respect the treaty of Madrid necessarily brought about a second war with Charles V., now the most powerful sovereign seen in Europe since the days of Charlemagne.

The greatest event in the course of the Second War for the Balance of Power was the famous siege and sack of Rome, which fell into the hands of the Imperialists and was for eight days a prey to ruthless pillagers. An enormous amount of damage was done to the Eternal City, but Bourbon, who led the troops to the assault, gained no advantage from this triumph, as he was slain on the first of the scaling ladders by a missile hurled by the artist Cellini (chĕl-lee′nee).

The war lasted three years (1526–1529), and was concluded by "the Peace of the Ladies," negotiated by Francis's mother and Charles V.'s aunt. It provided that Francis should give up Flanders and all claim to Italy, but that Burgundy should remain in Francis's hands, and that this king should also recover possession of his hostage sons by paying a large ransom.

During the period of peace which followed, Francis I. freely indulged his taste for pleasure, art, and literature. While he deserves great blame for the license of his own manners, and for the lack of morals which he encouraged at his court, he also deserves great credit for fostering science and literature, whereby he earned in France the title "King of Culture."

It was he who encouraged the coming of many prominent artists (including Leonardo da Vinci, the painter of "The Last Supper," and Cellini, who cast the silver statue of Perseus). He also brought back from his Italian campaigns many art treasures to adorn his castles and rare books for his library.

Francis was, besides, most lavish of the funds obtained as booty, and a great lover of everything beautiful. Thus it was that he erected the palaces of Fontainebleau (fôn-tĕn-blō′) and of St. Germain (săn-zhâr-măn′), rebuilt the Louvre, Pantheon, and city hall in Paris, and created near the banks of the Loire famous fairylike castles (Chambord, Chenonceaux, Chaumont, and Azay-le-Rideau), all of which are romantically situated, decorated in magnificent style, and bear his favorite emblem, the salamander.

Francis I. has also the honor of being the founder of one of France's great seaports, Le Havre (lẽ ȧv′r'), which ever

since 1517 has kept increasing in size and importance, until it is now one of the most thriving Atlantic commercial seaports, and one of the gateways through which thousands of tourists yearly enter the fascinating country of France.

Castle of Chambord.

Literature made great progress in France during this reign. Among the great men of the time were three poets (Amyot, Ronsard, and Marot), and one very famous satirical prose writer (Rabelais). This was the epoch, too, when several religious orders were founded, — including that of the Jesuits, — all of which were to exert great influence in various Catholic countries.

During the period of peace between the second and third wars with Charles V., Francis arranged for his son's

marriage with Catherine de' Medici (dā mĕd′e-chee), a niece of the Pope, and daughter of the famous Duke of Florence, Lorenzo de' Medici. This marriage assured France, not only the alliance of the Pope, but an immense sum of money, which was very welcome, as the king and his sons were always short of funds.

Vast changes were now taking place in France. The Renaissance was in full progress, and many new discoveries were being made. Francis showed interest in them all. When he heard that the Spaniards and Portuguese were rapidly gaining wealth from their lands in America, he decided that he too was entitled to a share of the New World, saying in playful defiance: "Just show me the clause in the will of Father Adam which divides America between you (Portuguese and Spaniards), and excludes the French!" French fishermen therefore visited the coasts of New′foundland and Labrador in quest of cod, and Verrazä′no explored a great part of the coast, to which he first gave the name of New France. In 1535 Cartier (cär-tyā′) raised the French standard in Canada, which was called New France, and from that time until its conquest by the English (1763) this part of America was an important French colony.[1]

LXIII. THE END OF FRANCIS I.'S REIGN

WHILE Francis was gradually changing the face of the country by his manifold improvements, his rival Charles V. was covering himself with glory by

[1] *Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, page 213.

besieging Tunis, the stronghold of the Mussulman pirates, whence he freed twenty thousand Christian captives. The Emperor's power and influence were greatly increased by this triumph. As he passed from one to another of his vast dominions, he made it a point to converse with each nation in its own language; for he was a famous linguist, and he was often heard to declare, "One is as many times a man as one knows different languages!"

Francis was jealous, and seeing the influence of his rival constantly increasing, he dreaded evil consequences for himself and for France. He therefore gladly seized the pretext of the murder of one of his agents at Milan to begin the Third War for the Balance of Power against Charles V.

Meanwhile, the French king had sought the alliance of Turkey, justifying himself for associating with unbelievers by saying: "When the wolves attack the flock, one has the right to call the dogs to help!" This alliance, which sorely shocked Christian Europe, won for France the exclusive privilege of trading in the eastern seas, as well as that of protecting all Christians in the East and the holy places visited so frequently by pilgrims.

As soon as the war broke out, Charles hastened to invade Provence, where he would doubtless have been successful, had not the French general devastated the country ahead of him so thoroughly that he could find no provisions to feed his army, and was obliged to retreat to escape starvation.

It was during the Third War for the Balance of Power that a great French physician, Ambrose Paré (pȧ-rā′), made a discovery which was to be of lasting benefit in

medicine. You see, people in those days were very literal, and because the good Samaritan in the New Testament poured oil in the wounds of the man who had fallen by the wayside, it was customary to treat even gunshot wounds by that primitive method. At one battle, however, the supply of oil was so limited that Paré and his assistant physicians soon had none left. The great doctor then gazed at the wounded in despair, having no hope of saving them; yet, unable to stand by inactive while people were suffering, he promptly soused bandages in cold water, and proceeded skillfully to bind up the wounds with them, saying compassionately, "We can at least make them as comfortable as possible, and ease their departure from this world by keeping these bandages moist."

He was greatly surprised to discover that the patients thus tended had less fever, and recovered much faster, than those who had been doctored in the old way with oil. The result of this experiment was that no oil was thereafter poured into wounds. Paré also has the credit of making other helpful discoveries in medicine, which are connected with his name.

The third war against Charles V. ended with the treaty of Nice (nees, 1538), which provided for a ten years' truce between the two kings. Soon after this, Charles V., wishing to proceed from Spain to Flanders, begged Francis I.'s permission to cross France. The king's fool, on hearing of this proposal, appeared at court with a huge book under his arm, and when his master smilingly inquired why he carried one so large, promptly said: "To keep a record of all the fools, and I have inscribed the name of Charles V. at the head of my list!"

Francis, amused by this sally, good-naturedly inquired, "But what will you do if I allow him to pass through my dominions unharmed?"

"I shall efface his name, your majesty, and inscribe yours there in its stead," promptly replied the jester, who, according to the custom of the day, was never rebuked or punished for anything he chose to say or do.

Painting by Gros.
Visit of Francis I. and Charles V. at St. Denis.

Having obtained permission to cross France, Charles V. began his long journey; yet, remembering vividly how unkindly he had treated the French king at Madrid, he never felt quite at ease while in this rival's power. It is even said that one day, when he was riding out, one of the young princes sprang up behind him on his horse, and flinging his arms around him playfully cried, "Now you are my prisoner!" upon which Charles turned ghastly pale, not realizing at once that this was only a joke.

On another occasion Francis made Charles very uncomfortable by pointing to one of his favorites and remarking: "You see that fair lady, my brother? She is of the opinion that I ought not to allow you to leave Paris until you have atoned for the treaty of Madrid." But this time Charles kept his presence of mind, for he merely replied: "If the advice is good, brother, it should be followed!" Still, he was very careful, shortly after, to conciliate the king's favorite by dropping a beautiful diamond ring into the basin which she held for him while he washed his hands, refusing to take it back again and gallantly bidding her keep it in memory of him.

The ten years' truce, provided by the treaty of Nice, lasted only four, a mere pretext causing hostilities to break forth afresh. A combined force of Turks and Frenchmen captured Nice, and a French army won a brilliant victory in Italy (Cérisoles). This war was ended the same year by a treaty, none of whose provisions were respected by either party.

It was during the reign of Francis I. that the Protestant Reformation began in Germany. Cal'vin, the French reformer, dedicated his chief work to Francis, but he never won the king's favor, and soon found himself banished from France. The policy of Francis was to persecute the Protestants in his own kingdom, while encouraging them abroad. His purpose in sending support to them abroad was to stir up as much trouble as possible for his rival, Charles V.

In his premature and embittered old age Francis persecuted the French Protestants more severely than before. In the southwest were many Walden'ses, people who had

long followed the teachings of an earlier reformer named Waldo. Because they now joined the Protestant movement, Francis ordered the sect suppressed (1545). Thus twenty-two villages were either burned or otherwise destroyed, hundreds of people slain, and many Waldenses forced to flee to the mountains, making their way thence out of the country as best as they could.[1]

Francis was always a most arbitrary ruler. All his decrees were signed not only by his name, but with the haughty formula, "For such is my good pleasure!" It is on that account that he is said to be the founder of the Old Rule or Old Régime (rā-zheem′), according to which the king had absolute authority, ruling by divine right, unchecked by Parliament or States-General.

Because of his many wars, his love of display, and his extensive buildings, Francis was always in need of money. To secure funds, he sold offices, and started the public debt, which is now greater than that of any other country, although the people of France are wealthier, on the average, than those of other nations.

Francis, who was also known as "Father of Letters," not only made French the literary language of the country, but had all the laws drawn up in French instead of in Latin. He also founded the royal printing press and the College of France, and greatly enlarged the royal library. A great reader himself, he is said to have perused many of the works of the great reformers (Waldo, Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin), but he remained a Catholic, and made use of all his power to maintain Catholicism in France.

[1] Read *In His Name* by E. E. Hale.

LXIV. THE REIGN OF HENRY II.

WHEN Francis I. lay on his deathbed (1547), he called his son and heir to his side, and solemnly parted from him, saying: "My son, I have been a great sinner. My passions led me astray. Avoid this, Henry. If I have done well, follow that, not the evil!"

This was sound advice, but unfortunately Henry was not the sort of man to take it to heart or put it into practice. Not only had he inherited all his father's strong passions and luxurious tastes, but he had received a very inferior education, and was, besides, entirely under the influence of Diana of Poitiers, who had been his father's favorite at one time. A very witty and handsome, yet wholly unprincipled woman, Diana did not scruple to play the leading part at court, and to make the young king neglect his wife, — Catherine de' Medici, — to whom, as you have seen, this prince had been married in early youth.

On coming to the throne, Henry II. continued his father's policy to a certain extent; yet, instead of maintaining the old ministers in office, he thoughtlessly encouraged the Guise (gü-eez′) and Montmoren′cy families, against whom his father had particularly warned him, doubtless foreseeing that they would soon become powerful enough to prove a menace to the throne.

At the very beginning of his reign Henry II. had to put down a rebellion which occurred in the region of the Charente (shä-ränt′) in southern France, still noted for its salt marshes. The people there, infuriated by the heavy salt tax, slew the tax collectors, and flung their bodies into the

river, crying derisively, "Go, ye wicked tax collectors, and salt the fish of the Charente!"

Such conduct could not, of course, be condoned. The king's troops soon severely punished these rebels, burning three of the ringleaders alive, and saying, "Go, ye rebels, and grill the fish of the Charente, which ye salted with the bodies of your king's officers, rabid hounds that ye are!"

This was still, you see, an age of retaliation, so it will not surprise you to hear that Henry II. was anxious to continue the bitter struggle which his father had begun with the House of Austria. He began by courting an alliance with the Protestants in Germany, although he discouraged the reformed religion in his own realm, and severely persecuted all those who professed it. On one occasion he is even said to have invited his court to witness the burning of some heretics, the court ladies taking particular pleasure in such grim diversions, and thereby showing how far from civilized they really were, in spite of the fine manners on which they prided themselves. But the burning of men and women who refused to obey the Catholic Church, and the public destruction by fire of "heretical" books, was then considered so praiseworthy that such a deed was called an "act of faith" (*auto-da-fé*). In certain other countries, where the Protestants had the upper hand, it was likewise considered a duty to persecute Catholics, and to destroy "papist" books and works of art.

Henry II., like the three preceding kings, waged war in Italy, but unlike them, he also tried to round out his lands on the northeast. He took forcible possession of the bishoprics of Metz, Toul (tool), and Verdun (vĕr-dŭn′) on the frontier, thus rousing Charles V.'s wrath to such an

extent that he soon appeared with an army to recover possession of these places. But Metz was so ably defended by the Duke of Guise that Charles could not obtain any advantage. Besides, the season was unfavorable, and the imperial host was ravaged by disease, so that Charles V. is said to have lost no less than forty thousand men in the course of this one siege. Obliged to raise it on this account, he bitterly exclaimed, referring to his own advanced years and to his youthful antagonist: "I now see that Fortune is like the rest of her sex; she favors young men and disdains those who are getting on in years!"

The city of Metz, which was taken by the French in 1552, remained in the hands of the French until 1870, when the Germans finally succeeded in recovering possession of it, after many vain attempts in the course of the intervening years.

A few years after the capture of Metz, Charles V., the great opponent of France, abdicated, leaving his vast estates to his brother and his son. Thus the latter, Philip II., became master of Spain, Holland, Flanders, Italy, and America, and by his marriage with Mary Tudor, Queen of England, soon secured the aid of that country also for the new campaign he was planning against France.

The united English and Spanish forces entered France on the northwest, and soon after won a brilliant battle at St. Quentin (săn-kän-tăn′, 1557). Had they been wise enough to take immediate advantage of this victory, they might have marched straight on to Paris; but they stopped to besiege a fortified town, and were detained there some time by an able French general, thus giving the King of France a chance to raise a new army wherewith to

defend his capital. The enemy were then forced to leave France without accomplishing much, in spite of their grand victory, which Philip II. commemorated by erecting the Esco'rial Palace in Spain.

The French soon after wiped out the shame of this defeat by recapturing Calais, which had belonged to the English for two hundred and ten years. As you may remember, Edward III. had obtained possession of it after a nine months' siege (p. 151), but the French, under the Duke of Guise, recovered it by a bold dash in less than nine days. Thus England lost her last stronghold on French soil, a loss which Queen Mary felt so keenly that she mournfully declared: "After my death you will find 'Calais' engraved on my heart!"[1]

The war with Philip II. closed with a treaty (Cateau-Cambrésis, 1559) which ended the long series of disastrous Italian Wars waged by Charles VIII., Louis XII., Francis I., and Henry II. By this treaty France was assured the continued possession of the towns of Metz, Toul, and Verdun; but she abandoned Italy, which remained mainly in the power of Austria most of the time until 1859.

During these Italian Wars, which extended over a period of sixty-five years, the French marched four times to Naples, and repeatedly conquered much of the peninsula, but each time soon lost control of the land again, owing principally to their unjust treatment of the people. It has been claimed, therefore, that these Italian Wars resulted in nothing but a series of French graves, extending the whole length of the peninsula. But the fact remains that the French brought back from those campaigns many priceless

[1] *Story of the English*, pp. 156–157, 232.

notions of art, science, and literature, which quickened progress in France, and brought about the Age of the Renaissance in that country. Not only were the fine arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, and music encouraged, but the modern theater was born in France at this epoch also; for the old mysteries, or religious plays, ceased to be represented in public, and were replaced by classic tragedies, the first and most famous of which was *Cleopatra*.

One of the clauses of the last treaty with Philip II provided that peace should be cemented by a double marriage, the king giving his sister to the Duke of Savoy′, — leader of the Spanish and English forces at St. Quentin, — and his daughter to Philip II. of Spain, a widower since Queen Mary's death. In honor of this double royal wedding a great tournament was held in Paris, in which the king and all the most influential nobles of his court personally took part.

The jousting had lasted many hours, everything had passed off successfully, and the combatants were already leaving the lists, when Henry II., spying two unbroken lances, suddenly challenged his captain of the guards, Montgom′ery, to run a tilt with him. Both lances were shivered at the first shock, but Montgomery failed to raise quickly enough the butt end of his broken shaft. A splinter entered through the king's visor and, piercing his eye, inflicted such a severe wound that he died nine days later.

The unfortunate outcome of this tournament put an end to all such celebrations for the court. Henry left his kingdom one of the strongest and richest countries in Europe, but his death was a severe loss: for many years to come,

France was to have only minor or incapable kings, being governed mainly by the cruel and crafty Catherine de' Medici.

LXV. A YOUNG KING AND QUEEN

WHEN Henry II. died, at the age of forty, he left four sons, three of whom were destined to rule over France, but none of whom had either good health, great intelligence, adequate training, or even good morals. His immediate successor was Francis II., then only sixteen years of age, a weak and wavering prince, entirely subject to his beautiful young wife, Mary Stuart.

Francis II. took no active part in state affairs, but devoted instead all his small stock of strength to the light pleasures which found favor in the eyes of his beautiful young wife. Queen of Scotland in her own right ever since infancy, and brought up at the frivolous French court, Mary Stuart, at seventeen, could not reasonably be expected to show much decision of character or sedateness, nor could she offer sufficient resistance to the subtle flattery of the gay courtiers by whom she was surrounded. It is natural, therefore, that she and her young husband should gladly have intrusted all the troublesome affairs of state to her uncles, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Lorraine, who thus became, for a time, the real rulers of France.

Now the Guises were stanch Catholics, and as such saw with displeasure the increase of the Protestant party. At this time the French Protestants were greatly encouraged by the fact that the chiefs of the House of Bourbon — close kin to the royal family — had joined

their ranks. Because the Bourbons were their leaders, the Protestants fancied they should have some influence at court; but they found before long that it was difficult either to approach the monarch, or to gain a fair hearing. Then they rashly decided to take matters in their own hands, and formed what is known as the "Conspiracy of

Château of Amboise.

Amboise" (1560). Their plan was to attack the court at Amboise, take possession of the young king, — thus gaining not only his ear but the custody of his person, — and then forcibly remove him from what the Protestants styled the baneful influence of the Guises.

Unfortunately for the Protestants, this plot was betrayed to the Guises; so although a few of the plotters escaped, Louis of Bourbon, Prince of Condé (côn-dā′), the real

leader, was taken captive. The prime minister, Chancellor de L'Hôpital′, — a wise and tolerant man, who succeeded in preventing the establishment of the inquisition in France, — could not prevent the execution of some of these conspirators, or the severe prosecution of Condé.

It was just while his trial was going on that Francis II., who had long been sickly, succumbed, after wearing the crown seventeen months, the shortest actual reign in the history of France. As he left no children, the scepter, at his death, passed on to his younger brother, Charles IX., then aged ten, thus depriving Mary Stuart and her uncles of their influence at court.

In fact, very shortly after her husband's death, Mary Stuart was reluctantly obliged to return to Scotland, which she had not seen since she left its shores at five years of age. Her despair on leaving France, the only home she could remember, was most pathetic, and it is said she sat on deck all night, hoping that when morning dawned she would still be able to catch a glimpse of the fair country where she had spent a brilliant and happy youth, and to which she addressed touching poetical farewells.

Mary Stuart was leaving France forever, just when great troubles were about to begin, for by this time the Reformation had made considerable progress, and counted a large number of earnest adherents in France, though most of the French were strongly Catholic. The French Protestants soon assumed the name of Hu′guenots, which is said to be a corruption of the Swiss word Eid′genossen (sworn members).

The most marked among the Protestant leaders was undoubtedly Admiral Coligny (co-leen′yee), a man of great

strength and nobility of mind and of unblemished character, who was respected by all, and who would fain have prevented the bloodshed which was about to take place. It is this Coligny who attempted to found a Huguenot colony in Florida, the colony which was exterminated by the Spaniards and avenged by De Gourgues (goorg).[1]

LXVI. CATHERINE'S REGENCY

WHEN Charles IX. was called to the throne by his brother's death, he was only ten, so the Chancellor de L'Hôpital, knowing Catherine's intense desire to rule, advised her to proclaim her regency without delay. Although the people had never seen Catherine in any position of authority hitherto, and although they vaguely mistrusted her because she was an Italian, they made no opposition to this move.

Catherine craftily played off one political party against the other, with the sole aim of weakening both and being left to rule without any interference. Besides, the long years during which she had been humiliated and set aside by the king's favorites had so embittered the queen that, when she finally came to power, she no longer trusted any one.

Still, she was wise enough to perceive that the country was in a very critical condition, both in religious matters and in politics. One of her first moves, therefore, was to call the States-General, and instruct them to find out what would be required to satisfy all parties. To them

[1] See *Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, pp. 74–75.

the Chancellor made this broad-minded address: "Inquire whether it may not be possible for a citizen to be a subject without being a Catholic, and if it is not possible for men, differing in faith, to live in peace with one another. Do not wear yourselves out in seeking to decide which religion is the best. We are not here to settle the faith, we are here to regulate the state."

After some discussion the States-General decided that Huguenots should be allowed to worship only outside of the cities. When any one was absent from town, therefore, it was often said that the missing person had gone out to a Huguenot meeting, — "to attend the hedge school," as the saying was (*faire l'école buissonnière*), — a saying which is still used in France to-day as an equivalent for "playing truant."

In pursuit of her crafty policy always to play one party off against the other, Catherine stopped the trial of Condé, for she hoped thereby to diminish still further the influence of the hated Guises. The queen mother also issued the Edict of St. Germain, which caused great dissatisfaction among the Catholics, because it gave the Protestants some towns where they might freely exercise their religion.

In hopes of settling all the religious difficulties, and thus reaching a lasting understanding, a famous convention was finally called, where Theodore de Bèze (bĕz), the chief Protestant spokesman, and Cardinal de Lorraine, head of the Catholics, set forth the views of either party and held a lively debate. Here, all went smoothly until the Protestant spokesman denied the real presence in the sacrament, when the Catholics in the assembly declared such a statement rank blasphemy, and

the convention had to break up without having accomplished anything definite. Thus, all the conciliatory powers of L'Hôpital proved vain, although he had opened the convention with a very strong speech, imploring the people to cast aside all such distinctions as Protestant and Catholic, Lutheran and Calvinist, and remember only that they were all Christians.

The fact that no satisfactory agreement *could* be reached, showed how rapidly things were nearing a crisis. Shortly after, while the Duke of Guise was attending mass at Vassy (vä-see′, 1562), he was disturbed by the singing of some Protestants, holding a meeting next door. His attendants, sallying out, first rudely tried to silence the Huguenots; then, as the latter resisted their efforts, they resorted to force. The result was a fight in which many Protestants perished, and this was the beginning of the religious wars in France, which were to last for the next thirty-six years, although they were interrupted seven times by vain attempts at peace making.

In the first of these wars the Guises were the leaders of the Catholics, and Condé and the other Bourbons, leaders of the Protestants. At first the Protestants gained marked advantages in spite of their small numbers, and before very long they were masters of two hundred cities, including Orleans. They also had a goodly number of soldiers, while the main advantage the Catholic party could boast was that it retained the custody of the king.

Feeling the need of additional support at this juncture, both parties now sought alliances, the Catholics securing that of their former foe Philip II. of Spain, while the Huguenots won the help of Queen Elizabeth of England,

by offering her the city of Havre as a pledge for the future restoration of Calais, which she demanded in exchange for her services.

All through this war Catholics and Huguenots were equally guilty of horrible excesses, and great cruelty was shown by certain bands of fighters on both sides. The Catholics greedily appropriated Huguenot property, thus enriching themselves at their foes' expense, while the Huguenots, on their side, ruthlessly destroyed many sacred paintings and statues, thus causing irreparable damage to some of the famous historical churches.

In the course of the first religious war the main battle was at Dreux (drẽ, 1562), where the Catholics were victorious. They then laid siege to Orleans, hoping to win it back from the Protestants, but while there the Duke of Guise was murdered by a Huguenot. After firing the fatal shot, this murderer is said to have joyfully exclaimed, "He is gone, the persecutor of the faithful, and will not come back!"

Before the wretch could escape, he was seized, and would have been instantly torn to pieces, had not his dying victim asked to see him. Guise is reported to have then asked the man why he had made so cowardly an attack, and when the latter declared it had been dictated to him by his faith, the wounded man retorted: "Then my religion is infinitely better than yours, for it teaches me to forgive you, while yours teaches you nothing but murder!" The duke then and there gave orders that his assassin should be immediately released, but his followers nevertheless detained him and finally put him to death with torture.

The murder of the Duke of Guise was shortly followed

by a compromise (known as the peace of Amboise), which the queen mother cleverly induced Condé and others to sign. This peace, however, proved more advantageous to the Catholics than to the Protestants, for when Coligny learned that Condé had signed it, he exclaimed ruefully: "Behold a dash of the pen which overthrows more churches than the enemy's forces could have destroyed in ten years!" Both sides accepted the peace, however, and joined forces in recapturing Havre from the English.

It was just after the conclusion of the first religious war that Catherine de' Medici began (1564) to erect the famous palace of the Tuileries (tweel-ree′) on the site of a tile manufactory to which it owes the name. Until 1871, when it was destroyed, this palace was to be the abode in Paris of French monarchs. After making all her arrangements for the construction of this royal dwelling, — which was built without regard to cost, and decorated most lavishly, — Catherine set out on an extensive tour of France with her son, whom she conducted to Bayonne (ba-yōn′), to hold an interview with her married daughter, the Queen of Spain, and with the Duke of Al′va, a famous foe of Protestantism.

LXVII. THE FORCED WEDDING

AFTER the meeting at Bayonne, the queen mother ceased to show any favor to the Huguenots. This roused their suspicions, and, believing that they must hold themselves ready to defend their lives and liberty, they began to arm. The second religious war followed, in which was fought the bloody but indecisive battle of

St. Denis, at the gates of Paris. Peace was soon signed again, but it did not prove lasting.

In the third war, a terrible battle took place at Jarnac (zhär-näc′, 1569). At the beginning of this memorable encounter, Condé (Louis of Bourbon) was not only wounded in one arm, but had one leg shattered by a cannon-ball. Notwithstanding these disabling wounds, he insisted upon fighting, calling out bravely to his dismayed followers, "Go on, noble Frenchmen, behold the combat which you have so much desired, and remember in what state Louis of Bourbon entered into it for Christ and his country!"

In spite of heroic efforts, Condé was soon surrounded and made prisoner. Just as he was giving up his sword, a cowardly enemy, stealing up behind him, shot him in the head! Thus deprived of a leader, the Huguenots lost the battle, and were in a state closely bordering on despair, when the widowed Queen of Navarre (Jeanne d'Albret) suddenly appeared in their camp with her son and with young Henry of Bourbon, the son of Condé.

Presenting both lads to the Protestant army, this lady said: "Soldiers, I offer you everything I have to give — my dominions, my treasures, my life, and, what is dearer to me than all, my child. I make here solemn oath before you all, I swear to defend to my last sigh, the Holy Cause which now unites us." Her son, Henry of Navarre (who was to be later on Henry IV. of France), then declared, in his turn: "I swear to defend the religion, and to persevere in the common cause until death or victory has restored to us all that liberty for which we fight."

With the addition of two such important partisans to their army, the Huguenots took courage again, and, after more

fighting and marching, obtained a peace (St. Germain, 1570) which granted them many privileges, including the possession of four fortified towns. But these concessions angered and seriously alarmed the Catholics, who soon prevailed upon Catherine to make further attempt to rid herself of such dangerous foes.

Hoping either to win over the principal Huguenot noblemen, or to get them all in her power, Catherine now proposed that Henry of Navarre should come to Paris to wed her daughter. Henry's mother, pleased with this offer, gladly came herself to Paris to negotiate the marriage, but even while visiting Catherine de' Medici, she died so suddenly that there have been suspicions ever since that she may have been poisoned.

In spite of this tragic death, the preparations for the marriage went on, and many of the principal Huguenots came to Paris with Henry of Navarre to attend the festivities. But the bride, Margaret, had no desire to accept the bridegroom thus forced upon her, and obstinately declared she would say "no" even at the altar. Besides, the priests were reluctant to celebrate a marriage between a Roman Catholic and a Protestant, and did not consent to do it till the king had threatened to lead his sister into a Protestant meeting, and have her married there.

Henry of Navarre, being a Huguenot, refused, as leader of his party, to enter Notre Dame for the marriage services, so his nuptials had to be celebrated on a platform just outside of the sacred building. At the wedding, the bride still refused to say "yes," or to nod her head in answer to the priest's question. Her royal brother, therefore suddenly stepped up behind her, and gave her a rude

thrust which made her head bob, sternly calling out to the priest, "Go on, she has nodded her consent!"

Among the Protestants who had come to Paris to witness the wedding, and to celebrate the reconciliation which it heralded between the conflicting parties, was the great Admiral Coligny, whom King Charles then embraced joyfully, saying, "I have you now, my father, and do not think that you shall escape me easily again!" Indeed, the young king talked so much to him that Catherine began to fear lest her son might yet escape from her influence and fall under that of the admiral. In her terror, Catherine determined to rid herself of this possible rival, and she and Guise hired an assassin to fire upon him as he was leaving the Louvre.

Notre Dame.

Although the admiral was only wounded, the mere fact that he had been attacked in this way, in such a place, roused keen indignation among the Huguenots assembled in Paris. When the king heard of it, he flung down his tennis racket, petulantly crying, "Am I never to have peace?" Then he went to visit the wounded admiral, and expressed great sympathy.

It may be that this very visit precipitated matters, for

Catherine and her most devoted followers now began to plot a great Huguenot massacre. Some of those who were approached in regard to it were in favor of getting rid of all the Huguenot leaders at any cost, but others were too honorable to subscribe to any such measure; one man, for instance, boldly declared: "God forbid that I should give my assent to any design so perfidious — one so fatal to the honor of France and to the repute of my king!"

LXVIII. THE MASSACRE OF THE HUGUENOTS

CHARLES IX. was one of those who opposed a Huguenot massacre, obstinately refusing at first to sign the decree his mother presented. But his was a weak and credulous nature, so at the end of a very few days, wearied by Catherine's importunities, and convinced besides by her false statements that the Huguenots were really plotting against his life, he suddenly seized the pen, and signed the order for the massacre, exclaiming hysterically: "By God's death, since you will kill the admiral, kill them all! Kill all the Huguenots in France, so that none may be left to reproach me. By God's death, kill them all!"

Having thus wrung from her weak and bewildered son the permission she desired, Catherine intrusted to Guise and certain other influential Catholics, the charge of murdering the Huguenot wedding guests who were still tarrying in Paris. It was settled that the massacre should take place on St. Bartholomew's Day, and that the bells of the famous old church near the Louvre should ring out the

signal for the attack at two o'clock in the morning. The houses where the principal Huguenot noblemen lodged were all marked in advance, and the conspirators agreed to recognize each other, even in the darkness, by means of a white sleeve or badge which all were to wear on the left arm.

At first the plan had been to sacrifice only a few of the leaders, but the lists gradually grew longer and longer, so that by the time the signal bell pealed forth, a general massacre had been arranged. Most of the prominent Huguenots in Paris, and many of their followers, were slain, for they were taken by surprise in the night, and thus unable to offer any defense; besides, the gates of the city were closed and guarded so that none could escape.

The Duke of Guise, without troubling himself about lesser victims, proceeded immediately to the house of Admiral Coligny. After posting men to prevent any attempt at escape, he sent guards upstairs to murder his aged political rival. Breaking into Coligny's sleeping room, these assassins found him there, calm and composed, although at the first alarm he had bidden his servants escape by way of the roofs, saying: "For a long time past I have kept myself in readiness for death. As for you, save yourselves if you can!"

When the door was broken open, the guard abruptly inquired, "Are you Coligny?"

"Yes, I am he, young man, and you ought to respect my gray hairs," replied the admiral, adding philosophically, "But you will not shorten my life much!"

The murderer, having thus ascertained that this was really the victim he sought, dealt Coligny a mortal blow, and had barely done so, when he heard his master call out

impatiently from below, "Is it done? Show me some proof." Although the breath had not yet left the admiral's body, the assassin hurled him out of the window, at the duke's feet, where some one wiped the blood away from the dead man's face, to enable the duke to make quite sure that the right person had been dispatched. Standing there, gazing at his victim, the Duke of Guise touched the corpse with his foot, crying in a tone of wonder, "Gracious, I didn't know he was so tall!" [1] Then, turning to his followers, he boldly exclaimed: "Courage, companions, we have begun well. On to the others!"

It is said that Charles IX., hearing the bells peal out their terrible signal, was seized with sudden repentance, and sent a messenger off in great haste to stay the duke's hand. But the order did not arrive till after Coligny was murdered, so Guise coolly sent back word, "Tell the king it is too late!"

Meantime, other murderers were at work also. Not only were more than two thousand Huguenots slain, but a few Catholics as well; for the great disorder made a good opportunity for wreaking private revenge. Even in the Louvre, the massacre went on, the Huguenots there being led down into the palace yard, and only Henry of Navarre and young Condé were allowed the alternative of "Mass or the Bastille!" In the new Queen of Navarre's bedroom a few Huguenots were murdered, some frantic followers of the bridegroom having tried to take refuge there from the foes so hotly pursuing them.

When the day dawned, Charles IX. himself is said to have gone out on a balcony of the Louvre, where, armed

[1] In French the same word means "tall" and "great."

with a crossbow, he shot at the fugitives who were vainly trying to gain the bridge and flee across the river. We are also told that Catherine and her maids paraded the streets, gazing complacently at their victims.

Besides Henry of Navarre and the Prince of Condé, the king spared his Huguenot nurse, and his physician Paré, because he was much attached to them both, and depended upon them for comfort in many ways.

LXIX. DEATH OF CHARLES IX.

THE massacre of St. Bartholomew (Aug. 24, 1572) was, as we have seen, aimed mainly against the aristocratic Huguenots, — the leaders of their political party, — for it was intended to carry out Alva's advice, which was: "Take the big fish and let the small fry go. One salmon is worth more than a thousand frogs!" The massacre was not confined to Paris, however, as orders for similar murders were sent to various provinces. In some places these commands were obeyed without question; in others, the governors bluntly refused to conform, and even two executioners declared that, while they were ready to do their duty and put to death persons who had been tried and found guilty, they utterly refused to execute those against whom nothing had been proved!

The governor of Bayonne wrote: "Sire, I have communicated the commands of your Majesty to the inhabitants of the town and the soldiers of the garrison, and I have found good citizens and brave soldiers, but not one executioner; on which account, they and I humbly beseech

you to employ our arms and our lives in things we can effect. However perilous they may be, we shall willingly shed therein the last drop of our blood!"

Another noble soul declared: "Sire, I have received an order under your Majesty's seal, to put the Protestants of this province to death. I respect your Majesty too much not to believe that this letter is a forgery, and if, which God forbid, the order be genuine, I respect your Majesty too much to obey you."

Notwithstanding such refusals, the massacre in other provinces proved so extensive that more than twenty thousand Huguenots were slain in France.

The news of the massacre of St. Bartholomew was received very differently by various people. Chancellor de L'Hôpital, for instance, who had always opposed persecution, was horrified when he heard about it, and cried, "Perish the memory of this execrable deed!" But at the Spanish court, king and courtiers openly rejoiced, as over a great victory.

It was inevitable that the massacre of St. Bartholomew should rekindle civil war. During the ensuing fourth religious conflict, the Protestants intrenched themselves in La Rochelle, which was vainly besieged by the Catholic forces (1573). But after great hardships had been endured by both besieger and besieged, a peace was concluded near that city, giving the Huguenots liberty to worship in certain towns in the south; for most of the Huguenots lived in southern France.

This had barely come to pass, when the Duke of Anjou, a brother of the king, was elected to occupy the throne of Poland (1574), — thanks to the bribes which his mother

scattered lavishly among the electors to secure this honor. But he had barely left home to be crowned in Poland, when his brother Charles IX. fell dangerously ill, and it soon became only too evident that this king, too, would die without leaving any children.

The death of Charles IX. was pitiful in the extreme, for he suffered greatly. Being a consumptive, he had nu-

Painting by Monvoisin.

The Remorse of Charles IX.

merous hemorrhages, and the sight of his own blood always recalled the massacre which he had countenanced. At such moments it was with difficulty that his old Huguenot nurse could calm his terrors.

This poor young king died at twenty-four, frantically imploring God's pardon, his keen remorse proving that he was neither as hardened nor as guilty as his mother Catherine, who died some years later, without ever having expressed regret for that cruel massacre.

Although Catherine often gave Charles IX. bad advice, she nevertheless discovered what was likely to please a fickle people, for she once said: "Twice a week give public assemblies, for the specific secret of French government is to keep the people always cheerful. They are so restless you must occupy them during peace, either with business or with amusements, or else they will involve you in trouble."

LXX. AN EFFEMINATE KING

AS Catherine de' Medici was regent all through King Charles IX.'s minority and even after he had come of age, he can never be said to have really reigned. It is therefore not surprising that the queen mother continued to hold the reins of government in the name of her third son, Henry III., to whom a messenger had been dispatched in hot haste.

Henry of Anjou, King of Poland, and now King of France also, had greatly distinguished himself in his early youth by winning the battle of Jarnac; but he had not kept the promise which he then gave for bravery and energy. He was now a weak and worthless youth, devoted solely to pleasure, and thinking of nothing but the gratification of low tastes. He was so fond of dress that many of those who saw him declared he looked either like "an effeminate king or a masculine queen," and he devoted far more time to his garb and personal adornment than to any affairs of state.

Fearing lest the Poles might try to prevent him from leaving their country, or at least might detain him a long

time in making suitable arrangements for their government during his absence, he escaped from this kingdom like a criminal, riding fast until he had passed the frontier, and excusing himself to the one official who tried to stop him, by stating that he was most anxious to see once more a lady whom he loved. This lover-like anxiety, however, did not prevent him from lingering several months at Vienna and Venice, to enjoy the festivities offered to him there, so it was three months after Charles IX.'s death before Henry again set foot in France.

Henry III.'s first declaration was that all his subjects must live as Roman Catholics or quit the realm. He made this announcement with great firmness, but he was of such a weak and vacillating nature that very soon after he changed his policy, and began, instead, to favor the Protestants. The fact was that he found the whole country in a dreadful state, and did not know which party to favor. There were now not only Catholic and Protestant factions, but also one of Moderates, led by the Duke of Alençon, (à-läN-sôN′)—the king's last brother,—whose ambition was to establish liberty of conscience everywhere, and who tried to secure Queen Elizabeth's aid by becoming a suitor for her hand.

Instead of making serious attempts to bring order out of this chaotic condition, the new king devoted all his time and money, first to a grand coronation festival, and then to his wedding with a cousin of the Guises. The new queen was unfortunately not strong-minded enough to influence him for good, and her days were spent like his, in devising new costumes, in painting her face, and in giving elaborate entertainments to the king's favorites. These

young men, who were popularly known as his "darlings" (*mignons*), copied all the fashions set by the king and queen, and affected the utmost extravagance and languor, in connection with a fierce courage, which spurred them on to challenge any one on the most trifling excuse, until dueling became the reigning passion at court.

Painting by Leon.

Henry III. and his Pets.

The king and queen were extravagantly fond of pets; so one and all of these "darlings" pretended great fondness for them also. One of them actually received a title as reward for inventing a large flat basket which could be suspended around the king's neck by a broad blue ribbon, and which would contain, at one time, several of the toy dogs from which this monarch could not bear to be parted.

We are also told that the huge neck-ruffs, which had been in fashion during the previous reigns, were discarded by Henry III. mainly because he was afraid lest his younger brother, whose privilege it was to fasten this adornment, should use a poisoned pin, thus getting rid of

him so as to assume his place on the throne. But this king's love of dress had one good result, for it made him introduce uniforms among his troops, so that soldiers thereafter went into battle all arrayed alike, and the army thus assumed a more seemly appearance.

Both Henry of Navarre and Condé were forced to renounce their faith after the massacre of St. Bartholomew; but Condé effected his escape after a while, rejoined the Huguenots, and sought help in Germany, where he managed to raise a large army. On invading France, the German Protestant forces were bravely met by the Duke of Guise, who, in that encounter, received the wound in his cheek to which he owes his historic nickname of "the Scarred" (*le Balafré*). But Condé's army made its way to join the Huguenots in southern France; and Henry of Navarre fled from court and escaped thither also. Soon after, a new peace was signed, giving the Huguenots greater rights than before.

It was mainly because the king seemed so indifferent and the Protestants were so aggressive, that the Catholics, under the leadership of the Duke of Guise, formed what is known as the Holy League. Its open object was to uphold the Church, but it also secretly aimed to place Henry of Guise on the throne instead of the king, whose inefficiency had by this time thoroughly alienated the people's affections. It is true that Guise was not next of kin, but he boldly based his claim to the throne on a supposed descent from Charlemagne, and fancied he could gain his purpose by getting the good will of the Catholics, who after all composed nine tenths of the population.

These ambitious designs of the Guise family upon the

crown were at first kept secret, but Henry III. saw what influence the duke was gaining by siding so openly with the Catholic party, and determined to figure as leader of the League himself. He therefore boldly declared himself its head, although the Duke of Guise continued to direct all the movements of this powerful party.

LXXI. THE BATTLE OF COUTRAS

THE sixth religious war, which now broke out, was carried on with great cruelty, and ended by granting the Huguenots some of the judgeships, and eight fortresses, as a sort of guarantee that their rights would thereafter be respected (1577). Notwithstanding this agreement, which proved so advantageous to the Protestants, the Catholic party continued to predominate in France, and especially in Paris, where the sixteen wards of the city were under sixteen magistrates, all of whom were strong partisans, both of the League and hence of the Duke of Guise.

In a vain attempt to regain the allegiance of many of the nobles whom his weak and effeminate conduct had alienated, Henry founded the order of the Holy Spirit (Saint Esprit, in 1578), appointing at first only twenty-four members, which made it a very select affair. This was the second order of knighthood which had been founded in France, the first being that of St. Michael (St. Michel, instituted in 1469), which counted by this time so many members that it was no longer considered a distinction to belong to it. (See page 211.)

There had been already, as we have seen, six religious civil wars in France. A seventh was about to break out, but this time new complications arose to embitter both parties, for the Duke of Alençon had died. As long as this prince had lived, the Catholics fully expected him to succeed his brother, Henry III., whose weak constitution was being rapidly undermined by his fast life. But when Alençon passed away without offspring, it became apparent that the crown, at the death of the present ruler, would fall to Henry of Navarre, next of kin, but a Huguenot.

The idea of a *heretic* upon the throne of France was unendurable to the bulk of the population, which was, and has always been, stanchly Roman Catholic. For that reason the Holy League's plan to place the Duke of Guise on the throne now gained many adherents. Still, there were many Frenchmen who did not deem it right to attempt to change the natural order of succession. Besides, Henry of Navarre had many of the manly qualities which appeal strongly to the nation, for while he, too, loved pleasure, he was nevertheless a thorough soldier, brave, shrewd, and cordial, making friends easily, holding them fast after they were once made, and ever ready to bear anything and everything for the good of his party or people.

It was in 1587 that Henry of Navarre, leader of the Huguenots, found himself face to face with the royal army, at Coutras (coo-trȧ′), led by the king's favorite, Joyeuse (zhwä-yẽz′). The royal forces outnumbered their opponents, and when the Huguenots, according to their custom, knelt before entering into battle, one of the courtiers cried to Joyeuse: "Look! look! the Huguenot traitors

are already beaten! They prostrate themselves! They tremble!"

But a bystander, knowing better what such conduct portended, replied: "Do not be deceived, my lord; I know these said Huguenots. They are pleased now to appear down in the mouth and sanctimonious, but when we come to the charge, we shall find them devils and lions of courage!"

At this statement, it is said, some of the royalists were badly frightened, and turning to Joyeuse, timorously inquired, "What is to be done?" Their leader, who was quite as brave as dandified, retorted briefly, "Die!" And he set them the example by perishing on the battlefield after having fought to the last.

Just before the battle began, Henry of Navarre said to his relatives: "Cousins, I only remind you that you are of Bourbon blood, but with God's help, I will show you today that I am your elder!" To this, Condé retorted: "And we will show you that you have worthy juniors!" Thus saying, all plunged into the fray with such ardor that in less than an hour the royalist general was dead, his troops in full flight, and Henry of Navarre had won a triumph which gave him great prestige in France.

Although dauntless in battle, Henry of Navarre was a generous foe. Before beginning the fight, he sent word to the royalists what terms of peace he was willing to grant, and when, on the point of surrendering, the foe inquired what conditions he would now demand, he promptly answered, "The same as before."

The Huguenot victory in the south of France was offset in the north by the success of the Duke of Guise,

who drove back an invading army of German Protestants. The war, therefore, continued fiercely, and as it was carried on by Henry the king, Henry of Guise, and Henry of Navarre, it is often known as the "War of the Three Henrys."

Had the Catholics been united, there is no doubt that they could have triumphed quickly over the Huguenots; but they were greatly divided. The Duke of Guise was aiming to secure the throne for himself; his ally, Philip II. of Spain, claimed it for his daughter, a niece of Henry III.; and the French king, who wanted to retain his power as long as possible, was desperately jealous of these rival claims for his crown.

In his anger over Guise's growing popularity, Henry III. forbade the duke to return to Paris; but in spite of this, Guise shortly after marched boldly into the city. When the king ordered his guards to eject the disobedient nobleman, the Parisians rose up and formed barricades in the streets to defend the man who had become their idol (1588). Indeed, it was only because the duke forbade it that the people refrained from attacking the king's guards.

LXXII. THE MURDER OF THE GUISES

WHILE the Duke of Guise and the queen mother were holding a meeting on the Day of the Barricades, to see if they could not make peace, King Henry III. escaped from his palace and left the city to go in quest of an army wherewith to drive away the insolent subject who had refused to obey his orders. When the duke

discovered that Catherine had tricked him, merely to enable her son to effect his escape, he became bitterly angry, and promptly made himself master of Paris. But when the Duke of Guise bade the mayor of the city take certain measures to maintain order, the mayor boldly refused to obey any commands save those issued by his king, declaring openly: "It is a great pity when the servant drives away the master; but my soul is God's and my heart is the king's, although my body is with the wicked!" All sixteen magistrates, however, were in favor of the duke, and carried out his orders.

Paris soon assumed the aspect of a besieged city, and it looked as if the breach between the king and his subject might prove final. Then Henry III. — who was always changing his mind — suddenly declared he would pardon his rebellious subject, promised to exterminate the Huguenots, and named Guise general of the army!

Next, hoping to satisfy an angry people, Henry III. bade the States-General assemble at Blois; but all the members belonged to the League, and insisted on giving the Duke of Guise still more power. His sister wore a pair of golden scissors dangling from her belt, declaring they were intended to shear off the locks of Henry III. when he should be locked up in a monastery, as had been done to some of the "do-nothing kings." This made the king hate the Guises more than ever.

Now the haughty Duke of Guise was so brave that he once said, "Even if I were to see death enter by the window, I would not go out by the door to escape her." He therefore paid no heed whatever to secret warnings that his life was in danger. In fact, his sole comment was a con-

temptuous shrug of his handsome shoulders, and the scornful remark, "He wouldn't dare!" But this haughty nobleman was to find out his mistake before long.

One morning, very early, the king summoned the Duke of Guise and the duke's brother, the cardinal, to his council room in the castle of Blois. He had previously arranged that forty of his guards should be posted in his bedroom so as to attack and slay an inconvenient subject. Then he had his chaplain say mass, and was impious enough to have the following prayer openly read: "That God may give the king grace to be able to carry out an enterprise which he hopes will come to an issue within an hour, and on which the safety of France depends!"

After a brief term of waiting in the king's antechamber, the Duke of Guise was summoned to the royal bedroom, where, instead of being received by the monarch as he expected, he was pounced upon by the murderers. He bravely tried to defend himself, but was felled by repeated blows. His brother, the Cardinal of Guise, hearing a struggle in the adjoining apartment, vainly tried to rush to his rescue, but guards had previously been detailed to seize him also, and he was locked up in a cell, where he was put to death the next day.

The king, who had been waiting anxiously in an adjoining room, learning that Guise was dead, marched into his bedchamber, where he stood a long time looking down at the body. Finally he touched it with his foot, just as Guise had touched Coligny sixteen years before (see p. 263), exclaiming as he did so: "Gracious, how tall he is! He looks taller dead than alive!" Should you ever visit the castle of Blois, you will see a dark stain on the floor,

which is said to have been made by the blood of Guise, when he was thus basely murdered by a French king's orders.

But Henry III. evidently considered that he had done a most praiseworthy deed in ridding himself of the Duke of Guise and of his clever brother; for he proudly announced to his court: "At last I have killed the reptile, and to kill the reptile is to destroy the venom!" Then, going to visit his mother, Catherine, who lay on her deathbed, he triumphantly declared: "Madam, I am once more King of France. I have killed the King of Paris!"

Catherine faintly replied: "What, you have killed the duke! God grant, my son, you have not made yourself king of nothing. It is one thing to cut your cloth, and another to make it up!"

Evidently shrewd Queen Catherine plainly saw that her son was not the man to retrieve his past mistakes. The few days which still remained to her were spent, it is said, in bitter regret that she would not be able to resume the reins of government and carry out her many ambitious schemes. Meantime, the Leaguers, justly indignant at the murder of their idol, the Duke of Guise, declared Henry III. no longer worthy to reign. Mayenne (mȧ-yĕn′), a brother of the dead Guises, was made leader of their party, and took possession of Paris, where he ruled as king just as his brother had done. Even children marched through the streets loudly singing the praises of the Guise family and cursing the king, who had been formally excommunicated from the Church because of the murder of the cardinal.

As the gates of his capital were thus closed to him,

Henry III. soon changed his policy again, making friends this time with Henry of Navarre, his next of kin and heir. The two Henrys, uniting forces, proceeded immediately to St. Cloud, near Paris, whence they intended to make a determined assault upon the rebellious capital.

But the very day before this assault was to take place, a fanatical monk cleverly made his way into the royal camp, declaring that he had dispatches and a secret message to deliver to the king. The guard therefore led him into Henry III.'s presence and withdrew to a little distance. Then the monk — who believed that he would earn heavenly bliss if he slew the enemy of his Church and of his country — suddenly drew a dagger out of his sleeve, and stabbed the king in the abdomen. Jerking out the weapon, Henry III. struck his assassin, and gasped, "This wicked monk has killed me!" before he fell to the ground.

The king was right. His wound was mortal, but he lived long enough to make various arrangements, and he solemnly warned his cousin, Henry of Navarre, "Be very sure of one thing, you will never become King of France unless you first become a Catholic!" Then, still jealous of the Guises, and fearing lest that family might, after all, secure the power which he could no longer hold, Henry III. made the noblemen around his deathbed swear allegiance to Henry of Navarre, who, as soon as the last of the Valois died, became Henry IV. of France, the first of the famous Bourbon branch (1589).

The Valois race had ruled over the country for two hundred and sixty years, and had given thirteen kings to France. All through that period there had been a suc-

cession of wars: first, the Hundred Years' War with England; then several wars in Italy, and for the Balance of Power; and finally the destructive religious or civil wars, which had not yet reached their end. Thus the Valois, by their inefficiency and love of pleasure, did great harm to France; but they also did much good, in that they encouraged letters and fine arts, thus leaving many beautiful buildings and countless art treasures, which are now the proud boast of the country.

LXXIII. WINNING A CROWN

HENRY IV., who was called to the throne by the murder of his cousin, Henry III., was born at Pau (pō) in southern France, where the people still show the huge tortoise shell which served as his cradle. His mother, the Queen of Navarre, a woman of unusual strength of body and mind, sang cheerily at his birth, so that her child should be light-hearted; and she allowed him to be brought up exactly like the peasant children of the neighborhood, in order that he might become hardy, active, and independent.

Henry lost his father when only nine, and at fifteen, as we have seen, was taken to the camp of the Huguenots to become nominal leader of their forces. But he showed himself so brave and skillful that before long he was the acknowledged head of his party. He used to say, "Nature made me hot-tempered, but anger is a bad counselor, and since I have known myself, I have always been on guard against so dangerous a passion." But although he

showed self-control in restraining his anger, he never deemed it important to govern any of his other passions, and was, for instance, in the habit of falling violently in love with almost every pretty face he saw.

We have already seen how Henry of Navarre went to Paris to marry the king's sister, and how his life was spared in the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Later on, you remember, he effected his escape from court and returned to the Huguenot party, where he immediately abjured the Catholic religion, which he had professed only in order to escape death.

Although Henry III. had taken the precaution before dying to make the nobles swear formal allegiance to his cousin and successor, Henry IV., he had no sooner passed away than many of the Leaguers left the camp with their troops, declaring that nothing would ever induce them to fight for a Huguenot king! But some Catholics remained loyal to him, and one man expressed their sentiments when he cried, "You are the king of the brave, Sire, and none but cowards will abandon you!"

Being left with only four thousand men, the new monarch found it impossible to carry out the plan of assaulting Paris, so he withdrew with his troops. Meanwhile the extreme Leaguers, under the guidance of Mayenne, proclaimed the captive Cardinal of Bourbon, Henry's uncle, King of France. But as this cardinal died in captivity, and never enjoyed the royalty thus thrust upon him, he does not count at all in the annals of the country.

Very many Catholics urged Henry to be converted to their faith, and promised to support his claim to the crown if he would do so. Even the Pope is said to have re-

marked at that time: "Were the King of Navarre here, I would go down on my knees to implore him to end and heal these divisions by becoming a Catholic!" There was some hope that Henry might do so, because he was by no means a zealous Huguenot, and because he frequently said, "If I am wrong, instruct me!" Still, he was too blunt and straightforward to be willing to change even a nominal religion for expediency's sake only, and so the war continued.

Henry IV., who aptly described himself at this time as "A king without a kingdom, a husband without a wife, and a warrior without money," marched off to Dieppe (de-ĕp′), where the people gave him a warm welcome. But Henry always showed a great dislike for formality and long speeches, and put an end to all such fuss on this occasion by exclaiming: "No ceremony, my children! I want only your love, good wine, good bread, and friendly faces."

Shortly after this, Henry's forces were attacked by those of the Leaguers under Mayenne, at Arques (ark, 1589). There, Henry won a brilliant victory, so was able to write jovially on the morrow to a friend who had been absent that day: "Hang yourself, my brave fellow; we have fought at Arques, and you were not there!"

The following year Henry gained much territory, and fought another pitched battle with Mayenne and his Leaguers, at Ivry (eev-ree′, 1590). Many anecdotes are related in regard to this battle. The king, whose forces were so small that he had to depend greatly on his German allies, had been too poor to pay them for their services. He was, therefore, seriously annoyed when their

leader, Baron of Schom'berg, on the eve of the fight, came and asked for money for his men. Irritated by this demand, which he could not satisfy at that moment, Henry haughtily exclaimed: "Men of honor do not ask for money on the eve of battle!"

But the next morning, realizing how unjust he had been, he marched up to the baron in the presence of his army, and frankly apologized, saying: "Baron, I insulted you yesterday. This may be the last day of my life, and I would not willingly take away with me the honor of a gentleman. Pardon me, and embrace me."

The baron then answered: "Sire, yesterday, it is true, your Majesty wounded me, but to-day you kill me, for the honor you do me will oblige me to lay down my life in your service!"

Having thus atoned for his bitter words, Henry gave the following instructions to his troops: "My friends, keep your ranks in good order. If you lose your ensigns, pennons, or guides, the white plume that you see on my helmet will lead you on the way to honor and glory!" It is to this speech that we owe frequent historical and literary allusions to "the white plume of Navarre."

Mayenne's army was composed of choice French and Spanish troops, but all Henry's arrangements were nevertheless made either to win or to die. When one of his officers come to inquire what provisions had been made in case of retreat, he sternly rejoined, "There will be no retreat save the battlefield!" Then, too, when his men seemed to be on the point of giving up, and were already beginning to flee, Henry IV. saved the day by thundering at them, "Turn around, you cowards, and if you won't

fight, at least see me die!" But just as soon as the battle was won, all Henry's generous inclinations came to the front once more, and he bade his followers, "Strike hard the foreigner, but spare every Frenchman!" thus showing

Drawing by Du Semane.

Henry IV. at the Battle of Ivry.

that he could not forget that every native was one of his subjects.

This battle of Ivry was a most brilliant victory. Knowing that it was the turning point of Henry's career, one of his followers joyfully exclaimed: "You have, Sire, committed the bravest folly that ever was, in staking the fate of the kingdom on one cast of the dice!"

Having won this battle, Henry's next move was to press on and besiege Paris (1590), which he held for four months

under strict blockade. At first there were sufficient provisions so the inhabitants did not suffer too grievously; but during the last two months the famine became so dire that many people died of hunger.

The kind-hearted king could not bear to think of the suffering in the city. Some historians declare that he allowed convoys of provisions to pass his lines so as to relieve the people's distress; but the fact is that Henry IV. was far too good a general to permit anything of the sort. Of course the people's suffering could be ended at any time by surrendering; meanwhile the only supplies which entered the city were those intended for the sick and wounded, against whom no brave man ever makes war.

But the Spanish sent excellent troops which succeeded in relieving the threatened capital, just as Henry was about to become master of it. Seeing he could not now take it without a more bloody contest than he was able or willing to wage, he quietly withdrew, exclaiming, "I am like the true mother in the Judgment of Solomon, for I would rather not have Paris at all, than to see it all torn to pieces and dead." [1]

LXXIV. CONVERSION OF HENRY IV.

HAVING failed to take Paris, Henry ranged around, here and there, and finally laid siege to Rouen (1591–1592), being assisted in this work by his English and German Protestant allies. But once again the Spanish came to the rescue just in time.

[1] See *Story of the Chosen People*, p. 149.

Although Henry had won two brilliant victories, and had proved his courage and patriotism, most of the French Catholics still opposed him. Neither side could conquer the other, even with the help of foreigners. Perceiving at last the truth of Henry III.'s prediction that only a Catholic could win the crown of France, Henry IV. consented at last to change his religion.

We are told that his conversion occurred after the following odd conversation: "Do you," said the king to a great Protestant divine, "believe a man can be saved by the Catholic religion?"

"Undoubtedly," replied the clergyman, "if his life and heart be holy."

"Then," said the king, "prudence dictates that I embrace the Catholic religion, and not yours, for in that case, according to both Catholics and Protestants, I may be saved; but if I embrace your religion, I shall not be saved according to the Catholics."

After receiving some purely nominal instruction, Henry made all his arrangements to abjure the Protestant religion and become a Roman Catholic. He is said to have written playfully to one of his friends: "Paris is well worth a mass! On Sunday I shall take the perilous leap!" When all was ready, the king knocked at the door of the Abbey of St. Denis, which the bishop opened, inquiring, "Who are you?"

"The king," answered Henry.

"What do you seek?"

"To be received into the fold of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church." Then, kneeling, Henry impressively went on: "I protest and swear, in the presence of God

Almighty, to live and die in the Catholic faith, and to protect and defend it against all, at the peril of my life and blood!" After this public declaration of faith, the bishop granted him absolution, and led him into the church, where mass was celebrated, and a Te Deum was sung in honor of a royal concession to the wishes of about nine tenths of the people.

While Henry's change of religion was urged by his wisest counselors, some of his friends, Protestants by conviction, flatly refused to follow his example. His greatest adviser, Sully (sü-lee′), for instance, wrote him: "Should I ever change my religion, it would be from an internal conviction only; neither avarice, vanity, nor ambition would ever lead me to do so. Were I to do otherwise, I should give your Majesty good reason for suspecting the sincerity of a heart I could not guard faithfully for God."

Henry's next move was to be solemnly crowned in the cathedral at Chartres (shär′tr'). Most of the Catholics were now willing to obey him, but it was eight months after his conversion before the gates of Paris opened to him at last, and he could enter his capital without striking a blow. Many of the Parisians were so happy to see their king that they crowded about him, shouting; and when his guards would fain have driven them away, Henry good-naturedly exclaimed: "No, let them alone; let them all press around me. They hunger to see a king once more!"

Meantime, the Spanish troops, as you know, had entered Paris under pretense of helping Mayenne and the Leaguers, but in reality so as to obtain the crown for their own little princess, a granddaughter of Catherine

de' Medici. They were now obliged to leave, and as Henry watched them file out, he called out to them gayly: "Good-by, gentlemen. My compliments to your master, but don't ever come here again!"

Within the next two years, Henry became master of all France, for he was shrewd enough to buy many of the places which he did not conquer. When Sully, his friend and prime minister, was instructed to bribe the governor of Rouen, and grumbled at the price, the bluff king replied: "My friend, you are a fool. Give the man his price. We will afterwards pay everything with the very booty which they surrender to us!"

The Holy League, which had been all-powerful for many years, had lost much of its influence in France when the Spaniards joined it to gain the crown for their princess. Such power as it still boasted was undermined forever by a satire (*Satire Ménippée*) which made such unmerciful fun of the Leaguers that their association was almost killed by sheer ridicule.

Finding nearly all Catholics ready to obey their recently converted king, Mayenne finally made his submission, too, and was received by Henry IV. in a garden, where the king made this stout nobleman tramp around at such a lively pace that the poor man almost expired from fatigue. Henry, who was still spare and active, laughed heartily when he saw the pitiful plight of his former foe, and jocosely remarked in an aside to Sully, "One more turn, and I shall have punished this fat fellow for all the trouble he has given us!" Then, pausing and turning to Mayenne, the merry king added aloud, "Confess, cousin, that I have been going a little too fast for you!"

"Faith, Sire, it is true. If your Majesty had gone on, I think you would have killed me!" gasped Mayenne.

"Shake hands, cousin," Henry now went on, "for, by God's truth, this is all the ill you need ever fear from me!"

It was this generous spirit, this readiness to forget all past injuries, which soon turned most of his former foes into truly loyal subjects.

Having gained possession of his kingdom, Henry called an assembly of notables, whom he addressed in the following remarkable way: "I have not called you together to impose my own will, as my predecessors were wont to do, but to receive your counsels and to follow them, a notion which does not often come into the head of a king, and a gray-bearded conqueror like me. But the vehement love I bear to my subjects makes everything easy to me." It was this love also which made him anxious to ascertain the purchasing power of even the smallest coin, to learn the scale of wages for all kinds of work, and the mode of living of his peasant subjects, for he fully realized that it was only after such data had been obtained that he would be able to tax the nation justly.

To maintain his place as King of France, Henry was obliged to wage a three years' war against Spain (1595–1598), which still asserted claims to the crown. Early in the course of this war, Henry won a marked victory (Fontaine Française), where, we are told, he bravely exposed his own life to save that of his friend Biron (be-rôn′). Later, when a strong Spanish army seized the city of Amiens (à-myan′), he set out to besiege it, joyfully exclaiming: "My friends, I have long enough played the King of France. Now it is high time for me to play the King

of Navarre!" He said this because it was while still styled King of Navarre that he had won his greatest laurels as general. He now added to them by quickly retaking Amiens, and forcing an end to the war on terms favorable to himself and France.

In the same year, 1598, the king promulgated the Edict of Nantes (nănts, or, năNt), which gave Protestants the right to practice their religion wherever they pleased, allowed them the same civil privileges as the Catholics, and thus put an end to the civil and religious warfare which had desolated France for thirty-six years. This Edict of Nantes gave France the peace she so sorely needed.

LXXV. HENRY IV.'S SECOND MARRIAGE

HAVING finished warfare at last, and become sole master of his kingdom, Henry IV. immediately proceeded to reorganize it, so that it might become prosperous once more. Although this king had no moral grandeur of character, he was so shrewd and far-sighted a man, and had so able a prime minister in Sully, that the finances at the end of his reign were in prosperous condition, and there were even forty-two million francs in reserve in the royal treasury.

Henry himself took a lively interest not only in agriculture but also in commerce and manufacture. He encouraged the culture of silkworms, the making of glass and pottery, and the weaving of silks and velvets. The first weavers were even allowed to ply their trade in the galleries of the Louvre, where are now exhibited some of

the finest paintings, statues, etc., that the world can show; and he founded the Gobelin (go-bē-lăn′) tapestry establishment. He had many good roads built, for he realized that good means of communication would greatly enrich the country. Besides, he has the honor of planning the canals of France, and of constructing the one which unites the Seine and the Loire.

Henry IV. embellished Paris in many ways. We are told that when a Spanish ambassador once commented upon the difference between the city under his rule, and while it was in the hands of the Leaguers, he quietly remarked: "Oh, you see, *then* the father of the family was not at home. Now that he is here to care for his children, all goes well again with them!" The French were pleased with this paternal attitude, which was further shown by one of his sayings often quoted — namely, that his main ambition was to see France so prosperous that every peasant could afford to have a chicken in the pot on Sunday!

Henry is also known as a great colonizer. It was during his reign that Quebec′ was founded by the French in Canada.[1]

It is a matter of history that Henry never lived on good terms with the wife who was forced to marry him just before the massacre of St. Bartholomew. They separated soon after their wedding, and Henry more than once courted some other lady, whom he promised to marry as soon as he could secure an annulment of this marriage.

On the strength of such a promise, one fair lady (Gabrielle d'Estrées) long expected to become Queen of

[1] See *Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, p. 174.

France, and therefore assumed great airs. On one occasion she ventured to find serious fault with the prime minister, Sully, even demanding that he be discharged; whereupon the king, ever loyal to this faithful friend, turned indignantly upon her, saying, "Know, Madam, that one friend like Sully must be dearer to me than even such a sweetheart as you!" This lady died before the king could obtain a divorce, and Henry, who had always shown great affection for her, wore black in token of mourning, although until then kings had never donned anything but violet under such circumstances.

It was very important that Henry should have an heir to succeed him on the throne of France; and as his wife, Margaret, was willing that he should be divorced from her, Henry continued to press his suit for an annulment of his first marriage, until the Pope granted it, because lack of free consent on the part of the bride had made the marriage invalid from the beginning.

Very soon after the divorce was obtained, Henry married Marie de' Medici, a niece of the famous Catherine. The new queen brought an immense dowry, and came into France with a brilliant suite, thus introducing into Henry's court more luxury, gayety, and elegance than had been seen there for many a day.

The following year Henry concluded the treaty of Lyons with Savoy (1601), whose duke had sided with the Leaguers and had given him an immense amount of trouble during the religious wars. By this treaty, Henry won some territories in the west where the people spoke French. This delighted him, for he often said that he had no objection to the Emperor keeping all German lands, and the

Spanish king all Spanish lands, but he wished all French soil to belong to the kingdom of France.

Henry proved a very wise and powerful ruler. Looking beyond his own borders, he suggested that each of the nations of Europe should send a certain number of delegates to a supreme council, which was to regulate all matters of warfare by arbitration. But before this utopian scheme could be carried out, it was necessary to humble the powerful House of Austria, to which belonged both the ruler of Austria and the monarch of Spain; so near the end of Henry's reign he planned a war for that purpose.

LXXVI. DEATH OF HENRY IV.

THE policies followed by Henry IV. were not approved by some of his subjects, especially the friends who had fought by his side throughout the religious wars, and who felt angry because he did not show them greater favor, or bestow upon them all the advantages they thought they deserved. Their jealousy and greed gave rise to several conspiracies, among others, one in which the king's friend Biron was implicated.

When this plot was discovered, Biron was given every chance to confess and be forgiven, but seeing he was obdurate, the king finally had him arrested. Thinking it impossible that Henry — who had saved his life in battle at the risk of his own — should ever proceed seriously against him, this nobleman showed no anxiety throughout his trial; but the king had determined that impartial justice should be meted out on this occasion, and when Biron was found

guilty and sentenced to death, made no attempt whatever to save him from the scaffold.

Henry IV. had no children from his first marriage, but he had six from his second, and three of these children lived to wear crowns, although one daughter — the unfortunate wife of Charles I. of England — lost hers in time.[1]

Drawing by Du Semane.

Henry IV. and his Children.

Henry was a most indulgent father. We are told that when the Spanish ambassador presented himself at the Louvre one day, he found the king on all fours, serving as steed for his young children. Glancing up at his stately visitor, Henry smilingly inquired: "Mr. Ambassador, are you a father?" Upon receiving an affirmative reply, he genially

[1] See *Story of the English*, pp. 259, 261.

continued, "Very well, then I will just finish this game!" So Henry IV. went on entertaining the little ones for a while longer, before rising to give a formal audience to an august ambassador.

One day, when a historian submitted a work which he was writing, Henry ruefully inquired, "But why do you reveal my weaknesses?" The author replied, "Because they will offer as good lessons to the Dauphin as the account of your many noble deeds!" This answer so appealed to Henry's common sense that he promptly said: "Yes, the whole truth must be told, for were my defects to be ignored, other things would not be believed. Well, write them all down, so that I may avoid such mistakes in future."

Henry had many friends of great ability, and used to consort as much as possible with the intellectual people of his time. One of the great saints of that epoch, Francis of Sales, spoke of him as "That prince, so great in every respect, from whose life greatness seems, as it were, inseparable;" and Henry fully recognized the saint's good qualities, for he once said: "He unites all virtues without one fault. He is the man the most fitted to root out heresy, and to establish the Catholic religion solidly."

When Henry was about to leave the country to carry out his ambitious plans against Austria, he appointed his wife regent, and had her solemnly crowned, knowing that otherwise her authority might not be respected. He must, besides, have felt some premonition that he was not to live much longer, for he remarked to his courtiers, who criticized something he had done: "I shall die one of these days, and when you have lost me, you will know what I

was worth, and the difference there is between me and other men!"

Seeing how depressed he was one day, his physician advised him to go out and take the air, so Henry suddenly decided to drive out and visit his prime minister, Sully, then detained at home by illness. While passing through a narrow street, the king's carriage was stopped by a block ahead, and during the brief pause a half-crazed man (Ravaillac) deftly sprang up on the carriage wheel, leaned over, and stabbed the poor king again and again. Henry sank back unconscious, and died shortly after (1610).

Lemot.

Statue of Henry IV., in Paris.

Henry IV. was buried in the Abbey of St. Denis, where, even during the Revolution, his tomb was respected by an enraged people, although all the others were desecrated. An equestrian statue of the king was erected on one of the bridges in Paris, a bronze horse being brought from Italy for that purpose; it met shipwreck on the way, but was later fished up out of the sea. This statue, which was

very famous indeed, remained only until the Revolution, when it was torn down and melted, to supply cannon for the new republic; but a copy of it now stands at the same spot.

The reign of Henry IV. marks the end of all feudal pastimes, for after his accession no more tournaments were held in France. It also marks the time when the French language assumed the form it bears at present, given to it by the great writers of this epoch (Malherbe and Regnier), whose style is still considered classic in France.

Henry IV. was not only a great monarch but a most popular one. His untimely death was sorely mourned by his people, fathers exclaiming to their children: "What will become of you? You have lost your father!"

LXXVII. THE MINORITY OF LOUIS XIII.

HENRY IV. had detected in his young son and heir many signs of intense selfishness, which made him once remark to his wife: "Madam, pray God that I may live, for, believe me, that naughty boy there will ill-treat you sorely when I shall no longer be here."

No sooner had the tidings of the king's murder reached the palace than a great sound of lamentation arose. One of the councilors rushed wildly into the queen's apartment, with such a countenance of woe that Marie de' Medici, springing up from her seat, exclaimed: "Sir! the king! this tumult! Is the king dead?" Whereupon the councilor replied: "Madam, be calm, I entreat you. Pardon me, the king never dies in France. Behold the king!" point-

ing to the nine-year-old Louis XIII., who was henceforth to be ruler of the country. We are told that it is this episode that gave rise to the saying, "The King of France never dies."

The queen immediately seized the reins of government. Even before the news of the king's assassination had spread throughout the capital, all necessary measures had been taken to secure her authority, and orders issued for the Parliament of Paris to assemble on the morrow. There, in a solemn session, — known as a "bed of justice," because the dais of the throne resembled that of a four-poster, — the little king publicly appeared, to signify to the assembled councilors that it was his express wish that they should hereafter all obey his mother, the regent.

One of the first acts of the new government was the trial and condemnation of Henry's base murderer, who had been seized immediately after his crime, and subjected to cruel torture to force him to reveal the names of his accomplices, should he have any. But in spite of all the horrors he had to undergo, the criminal betrayed no one. He was then put to death by fearful tortures, and his body was literally torn to pieces.

Although Henry's policy had been to lessen the power of the House of Austria, he had no sooner passed away than his queen began to court its alliance, thus entirely foiling her husband's designs. Then, too, being of a very weak nature, Marie de' Medici proved the easy victim of any favorite who happened to catch her ear.

The nobles who crowded around the queen flattered her until she allowed them such extensive privileges that they became nearly independent. They declared, "Kings

have had their turn, now we shall have ours!" In their greed for honors and power they not only tried to monopolize the fair regent's attention, but also strove to wring from her the funds which Henry had saved for his coming wars.

The only person at court who refused to bow down before the vain regent was Sully, Henry's counselor, who not only retained his old-fashioned mode of dress, but obstinately refused to adopt the servile manner of the other courtiers. For that reason, instead of being treated with the respect which the undeniable services he had rendered his country had earned for him, Sully was mocked by the dandified courtiers, who did not hesitate to make fun of him, even in the presence of the young king and of the queen mother.

On one occasion, when thus turned into ridicule, Sully boldly addressed his young master, saying: "Sire, I am too old to change my habits. When the late king—your father of glorious memory—did me the honor to summon me to an audience on affairs of state, he was in the habit first of dismissing the buffoons and mountebanks!" But, in spite of this sharp protest, buffoons and mountebanks were to have their day, so Sully retired from court, foreseeing that his wise measures would soon be overthrown.

Soon after Sully withdrew, it became evident that the real rulers of the country were the foster-sister of the queen, Leonora, and her husband, Concini (cōn-chee'nee). The latter, although he had never been a soldier, managed to obtain from the queen the position of marshal, which entitled him to command the military forces in France.

As the queen, like most small-minded persons, gave

undue importance to form and ceremony, she surrounded her young son with much pomp; yet, like most weak mothers, she proved either very indulgent or extremely severe. It is said that the little king once cried: "Oh, Madam, pray make me fewer curtsies, but have me whipped less severely!" Whenever such a punishment had to be inflicted, the queen — realizing her son's resentful disposition — always ordered that the whipping should be done by a servant closely masked, so that the king should not be able to recognize him and wreak vengeance upon him later on.

As you can readily imagine, it did not take Queen Marie long to distribute to the rapacious nobles all the money which her husband had collected for the proposed campaign against Austria. As long as the money lasted, the courtiers proved most obsequious, but when her treasury was empty, and there was nothing left to give them, they became angry and revolted.

There was, besides, at that time, such dissatisfaction in the realm, that the queen called a meeting of the States-General (1614) in hopes that they would be able to put the affairs of state in good order once more. On this occasion — the fifteenth and last time the States-General met until 1789 — Richelieu (ree-shẽ-lyẽ′) was one of the spokesmen, and made such an eloquent address that even then people began to perceive that he was a man of unusual ability. The States-General deliberated a great deal, but accomplished very little, which may be one reason why kings did not prove anxious to convoke them again for the next century and a half.

It was in the same year that the king, although only thirteen, was pronounced of age; but at a "bed of justice"

he turned to his mother, begging her to continue ruling in his name, and adding, "I wish and intend that you be obeyed in all things and everywhere, and that, next to me, you should be head of my council."

It was because Marie so favored the House of Austria that negotiations were begun to arrange a marriage between Louis XIII. and Anne of Austria, the eldest daughter of the King of Spain. After some difficulties, the wedding took place. Although the bridegroom was at that time only fourteen and the bride eleven, and both were expected to remain in the schoolroom a year or two longer, they were nevertheless henceforth husband and wife, as well as king and queen of a great realm. For some mysterious reason, however, Louis XIII. was never on a very friendly footing with his beautiful young wife.

LXXVIII. THE RULE OF FAVORITES

DURING the seven years of the king's minority, the Concinis gradually became so arrogant that none of the other nobles could endure them. In 1617, therefore, a great conspiracy was formed; the nobles finally persuaded the king that his marshal was a traitor, so, by Louis XIII.'s order, Concini was murdered the very next time he entered the palace. As soon as he was dead, the conspirators rushed into the royal presence, crying triumphantly, "Sire, now you are indeed king, for the marshal is dead!" When the cold-blooded young monarch heard these welcome tidings, we are told he deliberately stepped up to the

open window, and called out joyfully to the assassins, "Thank you, thank you, now I am king!"

Not content with ridding himself of Concini by a base murder, the king had the marshal's wife arrested, under pretext that she was practicing magic arts or witchcraft. During her trial, when asked to reveal what spells she had used to keep the queen mother so submissive to her will, Leonora truthfully declared, "Mine has been merely the mastery of a strong mind over a weak one." But the judges utterly refused to credit this simple explanation. They fully shared the popular belief that magic arts had been employed, and for that reason sentenced the poor woman to death as if she had been a common witch.

Not only did the nobles thus bring about the disgrace of both Concinis, but they also discredited the queen mother, who was shortly after banished to Blois. She withdrew thither, saying bitterly, "Poor me! I have reigned seven years, and now can expect nothing more than a crown in Heaven!"

The Thirty Years' War having broken out (1618) between the Catholics and the Protestants in Germany, there was danger that a similar struggle would be renewed in France. The Huguenots desired to make La Rochelle the center of a Protestant republic in France, which, of course, could not be allowed; and war resulted between the two parties.

Taking advantage of the disturbed state of affairs, the queen mother and her second son, Gaston of Orleans, began to plot against the king. Marie effected an escape from the castle of Blois through a window, joined a party of disaffected nobles, and fought one battle. But her quarrel with her eldest son soon ended; a reconciliation took place,

and mother and son again appeared in public on apparently friendly terms.

Meantime, Louis XIII. was almost entirely under the influence of another favorite (De Luynes), the man who trained his best hunting hawks, and who had been most instrumental in rousing his suspicions against the Concinis. But although this man was so ambitious as to aspire to the first place at court, he was not capable of governing well, and was soon obliged to yield to Richelieu, who from 1624 to 1642 was the real and very able ruler of France.

Painting by Rubens.

Marie de' Medici.

Richelieu was a remarkably clever man. One of his contemporaries said of him, "God seems to have set no bounds to his intellect." Besides that, he was patriotic and ambitious, his plan being to subdue the Protestants and prevent their setting up a separate state in France; to diminish the power of the nobles; and to weaken the influence of Austria in Europe.

In order to bring these three desirable things to pass,

Richelieu set to work with great skill. The year after he became prime minister he negotiated a marriage between the king's sister Henrietta and Charles I., thereby securing the alliance of England. Next, he induced Louis XIII. to enact severe laws against dueling, which had become so frequent by this time that challenges were exchanged on the slightest pretext. The penalty for the infringement of this law was henceforth rigidly enforced, and some of the greatest nobles of the realm died on the scaffold.

To suppress the Protestants, Richelieu next called forth all the military and naval power of the realm, and set off in person to superintend the siege of La Rochelle, the Huguenot stronghold. He surrounded it by troops on the land side, and tried to blockade it by the fleet on the water side; but he soon discovered that it would be impossible to hinder the Germans and English from smuggling in supplies, and he knew that as long as ships could enter the port the people of La Rochelle would be able to defy the king's authority. Richelieu therefore planned and built a tremendous mole, or dike, across the entrance to the port to prevent supplies from reaching the rebels.

The prime minister had proclaimed on starting out for the siege of La Rochelle, "I will employ all the authority the king will give me to ruin the Huguenot party!" — and, as you see, he certainly made the best use of his power for that purpose. Still, the Huguenots were quite as determined not to yield, and the mayor of La Rochelle assumed office only on condition that he should be empowered to stab the first man who mentioned the word surrender! We are told that the dagger with which to commit

this deed always lay on the council table, and that once, when some one ruefully remarked that soon no one would be left to defend the city, this mayor sternly exclaimed, "Even if only one man remains, that man *must* keep the gate shut!"

As long as provisions from abroad could reach La Rochelle, the siege proved endurable; but after Richelieu's mole was complete, and no more supplies could enter, dire famine set in. The inhabitants were therefore forced to surrender at the end of fifteen months, having suffered unheard-of hardships before finally giving in.

Although conquered, the Huguenots were granted civil equality, and liberty to practice their religion, by a new peace (Alais, 1629); but they now ceased to form a separate armed political party in France. They were, besides, strictly forbidden to emigrate to Canada, lest their influence there should become too strong in time, and they should form a state in the New World, hostile to the kingdom of France.

LXXIX. RICHELIEU AND LOUIS XIII.

ALTHOUGH Louis XIII. was of a very cold nature, and seemed as a rule satisfied to let Richelieu manage just as he pleased, the king occasionally showed signs of being jealous of his prime minister, and of wishing to retain the power in his own hands. On one occasion, for instance, when a question of precedence arose, the king bitterly remarked to Richelieu, "Pass on, pass on, for you are the first here!" Whereupon Richelieu, with quick tact, rejoined, "Yes, Sire, but it is only in order to show

the way to your Majesty," taking up a candlestick at the same time and preceding the king as if he had been nothing more than his master's lackey. It was thus that Richelieu, the proudest of men, knew how to humble himself to reach his ends, for he had a very strong will, and described himself accurately when he once said, "I

Painting by Gérôme.

"His Gray Eminence."

undertake nothing without mature consideration, but when I have made up my mind, I mow down everything that stands in my way, and then cover it all up with my red robe."

In speaking of his red robe, Richelieu referred to his position as a cardinal in the Church; for cardinals wore red robes in public. It was because he was a cardinal, and as such was addressed as "Your Eminence," that he was known at court as "His Red Eminence." On the other

hand, his stern confessor, Brother Joseph — who knew all his secrets, and to whom delicate missions were often intrusted — wore the gray Cap'uchin garb, and was known as "His Gray Eminence"; for the courtiers, feeling that he influenced in many ways the master they hated, feared and disliked him equally.

Shortly after the Huguenots had been finally subdued, Louis XIII. and Richelieu set out to make war against Savoy, an ally of Austria and Spain, with which France was no longer on friendly terms. The young king distinguished himself greatly in an engagement in the Alps, and the war was ended by a treaty giving France the right of free passage over the mountains.

After thus reaping laurels in war, Richelieu and the king quietly went on carrying out the great minister's various schemes to humble the nobles, by greatly diminishing the number of feudal fortresses, and compelling the aristocracy to respect and obey all the laws of the country. Even the decree against dueling was severely enforced in all cases; hence it was natural that the nobility, in general, should dislike the prime minister; but he invariably triumphed over their repeated attempts to oust him from power.

On one occasion, taking advantage of the king's brief illness, the queen mother, the queen, and the nobles, all eagerly plotted to banish the detested Richelieu. They obtained the king's reluctant consent to send him away, and openly rejoiced when Richelieu packed up his belongings and prepared to leave; but then the minister decided that it might be wise to have a parting interview with his royal master.

No one knows exactly what took place at this meeting,

but when it was over, Richelieu was fully reinstated in power, the king saying with more warmth than was usual with him, "Continue to serve me as you have done hitherto, and I will defend you against those who have sworn your ruin." The day on which the hopes of both

Bedroom of Marie de' Medici in the Luxembourg.

queens and courtiers were so badly frustrated is therefore known in history as the "Day of Dupes" (1630).

The next plot resulted in a second banishment of the queen mother, Marie de' Medici, who died at Cologne eleven years later, in exile and poverty, in the very house once occupied by the painter, Rubens, whom she had employed to decorate her palace of the Luxembourg (lük-säN-boor′). This sumptuous edifice had been begun shortly after her

husband's death, for she intended to retire to it when her term of regency was over. Her elaborate bedroom can still be seen there, but the pictures which Rubens painted of the various striking events in her life are now in the Louvre, where they give a good idea not only of this great painter's style, but also of this queen's extreme vanity. One of them is shown on page 304 of this book.

Louis XIII. showed great wisdom when he decided to retain the services of Richelieu, for it was mostly owing to this minister's genius that France soon became so prosperous and powerful. Many other rulers fully realized that the progress of France was mainly due to the cardinal. A century later, Peter the Great of Russia once exclaimed, "I would give half my dominions for a Richelieu to teach me how to govern the other half!"

Meantime, the Thirty Years' War in Germany had been dragging wearily on. First one country and then another helped the German Protestants in their struggle against the Emperor and his Catholic allies; but for a long time Richelieu took no part in the contest, except to send funds secretly when necessary. In the final period of the war, however, lasting from 1635 to 1648, France entered openly into the conflict, Richelieu's aim being to secure what he called "the natural frontiers of France"; for he had fully decided that, "Just as far as Gaul reached, so far shall France extend!"

In order to obtain these so-called "natural frontiers," Richelieu wished to extend the French king's territory to the very banks of the Rhine, and during the war in which he now zealously engaged, he helped to do so by securing possession of Alsäce′ (1639) and of Artois (är-twä′, 1640).

Richelieu could do more than one thing at a time. It was in 1637, in the very midst of the last period of the Thirty Years' War, that he struck another blow in his efforts to diminish the power of nobles. This he did by instituting the office of "Intendants," officers whose duty it was to watch over the government of the different provinces, so as to see that everything was done according to the laws of the country and the wishes of the king.

LXXX. END OF LOUIS XIII.'S REIGN

ONE great difficulty during most of this reign was that the king had no sons, and that his brother Gaston of Orleans, assuming that he and his children would some day occupy the throne, was inclined to presume upon these expectations. For many years after the king was married, he and his wife, Anne of Austria, were never on really good terms, and generally lived apart, — a state of affairs tending, of course, to foster Gaston's hopes of succession.

But during a severe illness, Louis XIII. experienced a sudden change of heart, and was reconciled to his wife. Twenty-three years after their marriage, she gave him the son destined to be famous as Louis XIV. The birth of this child — such a bitter disappointment to Gaston of Orleans — was a source of intense satisfaction to Richelieu, who had never liked Gaston, and was most anxious that the crown should never fall into his hands.

During Richelieu's sway many great reforms were effected in the army and navy in France. Besides, Riche-

lieu succeeded not only in extending the frontiers in the north, but also in conquering Roussillon (roo-see-yôn′) in the south from the Spanish (1642). While he was at the front in this campaign, another conspiracy was hatched against him, headed by young noblemen (Cinq Mars and De Thou), who were executed in spite of their youth and high position.

Now, the great cardinal had never been strong, and all through this last campaign had suffered greatly. By the time it was over, he was so weak that he could only travel in a litter. This was shaped like a small bedroom, with space beside the couch for a table and chair, so that a secretary could sit beside him even while traveling, and write down the letters and orders he incessantly dictated.

Perceiving that his end was near at hand, Cardinal Richelieu calmly made all his preparations for death, and when the last sacrament was brought into his chamber, solemnly cried: "Here is my judge, who will soon pronounce my sentence. I heartily pray that I may be condemned if I have ever had other intentions than the welfare of the religion and of the state."

When asked whether he forgave his enemies, Richelieu haughtily answered, "I have no enemies, save those who are enemies of France!" We are also told that in his last interview with his master, Richelieu said: "Sire, I now bid you a final farewell in this world. In taking leave of your Majesty, I behold your kingdom more powerful than ever, and your enemies vanquished."

It was then, too, that he designated Mazarin (mȧ-zȧ-răn′) — one of his helpers — as the most capable man to continue the work which he had carried on so ably during the past

eighteen years. In his will, Richelieu left his palace, afterwards famous as the Palais Royal (pȧ-lĕ′ rwȧ-yȧl′), to his master. He also bequeathed an extensive library to the city of Paris, and has the honor of being the founder of the famous French Academy, of establishing the Botanical Garden (Jardin des Plantes), and of rebuilding the Sorbonne, where his beautiful tomb can still be seen.

Lebrun and Girardon.

Tomb of Richelieu.

Although Louis XIII. upheld Richelieu loyally against the manifold cabals of the nobles, he received the news of his minister's death very coldly, merely remarking, "A great politician is gone." Even on the day of the funeral, seeing that the weather was very stormy, he only said, "The cardinal has bad weather for his last journey!" These unfeeling comments upon the death of a man who had given eighteen years to his service and to that of his country show how very unsympathetic this king could be.

Louis XIII. did not long survive the death of the prime minister who had made his reign so famous. When about to pass away, in his turn, he made arrangements that his wife, Anne of Austria, should rule in the name of his four-year-old son. The latter, having been privately baptized,

was now officially christened, and was then taken to his dying father, who inquired gently, "What is your name, my child?"

The small boy — who had evidently heard some court gossip — promptly replied, "My name is Louis XIV."

"No, no, my son, not yet," answered the dying father; "but pray God that it may soon be so."

Shortly after, when the king had fallen asleep, a servant bade this little prince gaze again at his father, saying, "My lord, look at the king asleep, so that you may remember him when you are older."

Louis XIII. left life without regret, for one of his last remarks was: "God be praised! I believe that it is now time to take leave of all I love."

His one pleasure having been the chase, he had built an extensive hunting lodge on the site of the present palace of Versailles (vĕr-sä′y'), where the woods were well stocked with game.

During Louis XIII.'s reign, St. Vincent de Paul — who is known as the "Steward of Providence" and the "Apostle of Charity" — started the first foundling asylum in Paris, founded the well-known community of the Sisters of Charity, and organized many other charitable works for which he is well known.

Great men of letters were particularly favored during this reign by Richelieu. He delighted in reading the productions of Corneille (côr-nā′y') and Descartes (dā-cärt′), who, together with many others, were just beginning to make a name for themselves, and thanks to whom the reign of Louis XIV. was to prove one of the most brilliant epochs which France had yet seen.

LXXXI. THE BEGINNING OF A GREAT REIGN

LOUIS XIII. having died (1643) before his son and heir was five years old, Anne of Austria was immediately proclaimed regent, as the king's will provided. The remainder of the will was, however, utterly disregarded, one of the queen mother's first moves being to take the young king to the Parliament of Paris to have some of its measures annulled. Little Louis XIV. is said to have behaved in the most creditable fashion on this occasion, standing very still on a high stool, and holding out his hand to be kissed, with the utmost gravity and decorum.

While the queen was nominally at the head of affairs, the royal authority was really directed by Cardinal Mazarin, the man whom Richelieu designated as most capable to carry on his work. An Italian, of rather common extraction, unable to express himself in French without betraying his foreign origin, Mazarin was equally despised and hated by the courtiers, many of whom fancied they should have had the privilege of ruling in the regent's name.

To overcome their opposition and secure his own ends, Mazarin cleverly used both flattery and diplomacy. It was because of his smooth and insinuating manners that the courtiers slyly said, "After the lion comes the fox." Richelieu, of course, was the lion, for he had opposed them openly, and had never tried to conciliate them by flattery or concession, as did the sly fox, Cardinal Mazarin!

It was mainly by his artful ways that Mazarin won the queen's favor, and gained complete influence over her. Still, clever as Mazarin was, he made one great mistake, for he sorely neglected the education of the little king, who

should have had every advantage. Thus, he left him until his seventh year to the care of women, and then abruptly turned him over to that of men, who knew little about children, and hence did not succeed in either entertaining or instructing him. Nevertheless, the child showed fine aptitudes, and an intense pride which evidently formed the basis of his character, and which, if properly directed, would have made him greater than he ever became.

When the history of his country was first read aloud to him, Louis XIV.'s youthful ambitions were so greatly fired that he boldly announced he was going to emulate Charlemagne, St. Louis, and Francis I.! And he flew into a terrible rage when some one reproved him for being lazy, by comparing him to Louis the Slothful, one of the "do-nothing kings."

Mazarin's neglect of the young king's comfort and education arose mainly from innate stinginess. He cut down expenses to such an extent, we are told, that he would allow Louis XIV. only two pairs of sheets a year, saying that if they were washed once every six months it would be quite enough, as laundering was very expensive!

With a miserly prime minister and a weak and vain mother, Louis XIV. received most of his training from his devoted valet, who was so impressed by his master's position and dignity that he insisted upon the boy's behaving like a king at all times. Once, when the young monarch, in playful mood, began to wrestle, this man suddenly sat down and put on his hat, two things which were never allowed in the presence of the sovereign. This unusual conduct on the part of a generally respectful attendant so startled and mystified the young prince, that

he paused abruptly in his play to demand haughtily what it might mean. Whereupon the valet, resuming his wonted bearing, instantly replied: "Pardon, Sire; I did not realize that the king was in the room!"

As the queen was known to be pleasure-loving, easy-going, and gentle, her brother-in-law Gaston and the other nobles eagerly clustered around her, flattering her in every way, and begging gifts and favors which she freely showered upon them. Indeed, such were the benefits they then received, and such their greedy hopes for the future, that they kept singing the regent's praises, until some one maliciously suggested that there were only five words left in the French language, namely, the oft-heard phrase, "The queen is so good!"

Louis XIV.'s reign had begun when the French period of the Thirty Years' War was just at its height, and it was on the very day of his coronation that the battle of Rocroi (rō-crwä′) took place (1643). In this memorable encounter the French general, later known as the great Condé, who was then only twenty-two years old, won a brilliant victory over the Spaniards; but the fame resulting from this triumph so completely turned his youthful head that he soon after joined a conspiracy formed by some nobles, who were of the opinion that they alone should advise the queen in Mazarin's stead.

At the head of the conspirators was the fiery Duke of Beaufort,—a grandson of Henry IV.,—who planned nothing less than the murder of Mazarin. But while Beaufort was brave, he was not cautious. So Mazarin, having discovered the plot, had this leader locked up in the fortress of Vincennes, where he had to remain in close

confinement until he effected a romantic escape five years later.

Meantime, the Thirty Years' War went on, and Condé — again in command — helped to win the battle of Freiburg (1644), where many brave Frenchmen lost their lives. This evidently did not trouble the young general, for when his attention was called to the fact, he carelessly retorted, "Why, Paris alone daily supplies France with as many men as we have lost during all these encounters!" Though he did not feel for his men, Condé could nevertheless inspire them to do great deeds; in this battle, for instance, it was reported that he suddenly threw his staff of command into a trench ahead of him, bidding his men follow and help recover it, which they did.

The next year Condé fought another famous battle (Nördlingen), and in 1646 he besieged and took Dun'kirk, a very important port on the Channel. But he was not the only famous general in France at that time; Turenne (tü-rĕn′) was equally noted for bravery, and shared with Condé the glory of his great victories. Besides, Turenne waged by himself a brilliant and successful campaign in Bavaria.

The war had lasted so long, and the losses had been so great, that the enemy were now weary of warfare. Not long after another victory by Condé at Lens (läN), the Thirty Years' War ended with the treaty of Westpha'lia (1648). This treaty not only secured France in her recent conquests, but assured the independence of both Holland and Switzerland. Besides, it placed France again at the head of nations, and for one hundred and fifty years thereafter served as "the basis of common law in Europe."

LXXXII. THE WARS OF THE FRONDE

MEANTIME, great changes had been taking place in France, where the aristocracy now was everything, and where the lower classes not only had no influence, but were said "not even to possess their own souls." The long war had proved so expensive that taxes had greatly increased, and loans could now be obtained only by paying exorbitant interest, a state of affairs which, by adding to the nation's already heavy burdens, fostered much discontent.

In 1648, therefore, the very year that the treaty of Westphalia was signed, civil war broke out in France: the people and the Parliament of Paris began vehemently to oppose the court. This conflict is known as the Fronde (frôNd) because the rebels acted like the Paris ragamuffins, who, armed with slings (*frondes*), pelted passers-by in the suburbs with stones, but scattered and fled whenever the guard turned out to call them to account for such misbehavior.

The first war of the Fronde broke out immediately after an attempt on the queen's part to awe the Parliament by arresting Broussel (broo-sĕl′), a member who strongly advocated more liberty for the people than the court approved. But the Parisians, on learning of his arrest, threw up barricades in the streets and angrily demanded Broussel's release. Their spokesman having failed to secure it the first time he went to the palace, the angry mob would have torn him to pieces, had he not coolly reminded them that they would gain nothing by it. On returning to the Tuileries again, this clever man obtained what he

wished from the queen regent, by pointing to the little king — then playing in the yard — and warning her gravely, "Madame, that child is losing his crown!"

Still, the trouble did not end with Broussel's release, for several of the discontented nobles gladly seized this opportunity to rebel, and helped the people and Parliament. They were joined by the Duke of Beaufort, and the disturbance became so alarming that the court soon fled from Paris, taking refuge at St. Germain, where nothing had been prepared for its coming. It was customary in those days to travel with bed, bedding, kitchen utensils, etc., and as in the hurry of departure nothing of the sort had been provided, the royal party had to suffer all manner of hardships. The king, in particular, felt these privations so keenly that he took a strong dislike to St. Germain.

Having escaped in safety from the capital, the queen took prompt measures to suppress the Fronde, and ordered Condé to blockade Paris. Several skirmishes occurred between the royal troops and the rebels before an agreement was reached which put an end to what is known as the Parliamentary or Old Fronde (1649).

Although checked for the present, civil war was not at an end. Next year broke out what is known as the Fronde of the Princes, or Young Fronde, in which the principal nobles took part. Condé himself headed the faction, through jealousy of Mazarin, but was promptly arrested, and during his captivity in Vincennes beguiled long hours by cultivating carnations, of which he was very proud. His friends, however, raised so large an army against Mazarin that the unpopular minister was obliged to flee from Paris.

In the midst of the excitement a rumor spread that the court also had again secretly left the city, carrying off the little king. At this report the people became frantic, and crowded around the palace, clamoring for a sight of their sovereign, to make sure he was still in their midst. The queen tried to pacify the mob, but perceiving that her efforts were vain, she persuaded the little king — who was already in bed — to feign sleep, and then admitted a certain number of the rioters, bidding them file noiselessly through the royal bedchamber and satisfy themselves that, as they had been assured, Louis was there, wrapped in slumber.

The king, then twelve years old, pretended sleep while these Parisians gazed their fill upon him. But the vivid impression left by the clamors of the mob, and this night invasion of the palace, were never effaced from his mind, and helped to determine him, when older, to take up his abode outside of the tumultuous capital.

Released from prison, Condé now sought more and more power, but finding, to his disgust, that Mazarin's influence still prevailed at court, he resumed his plots with other nobles, and began open rebellion against the royal party. The king and his mother left Paris, and presently summoned Mazarin to their assistance. Returning toward the capital, the youthful king was taken by Mazarin to witness the one great battle of the Young Fronde. This encounter took place just outside one of the gates of Paris (in the Faubourg St. Antoine), where Turenne, at the head of the royal troops, encountered Condé, leading the rebels. Such was the activity which Condé displayed on this memorable occasion that Turenne admiringly

exclaimed, "I have not seen one Condé to-day; I have seen more than twelve of them!"

In spite of all this energy, Condé would have been sorely worsted in this battle had not the daughter of Gaston (Mlle. de Montpensier) mounted to the top of the Bastille, and thence boldly directed the king's cannon upon the royal troops, thus checking their advance. This lady, although several years older than Louis XIV., and his cousin besides, had been most anxious to become Queen of France, as Mazarin well knew. By siding thus openly with the royal foes on this occasion, however, she forfeited her last chance of winning a crown; as Mazarin put it, "By that cannon-shot she killed her husband!"

Mlle. de Montpensier, Daughter of Gaston of Orleans.

Now Mazarin knew that the nobles were united only by their dislike of him, and that the Spaniards had been invited to take part in the war under pretext of ousting him from office. He therefore advised the queen to banish him from court a second time, and patiently waited for the princes to quarrel among themselves. No sooner had this come to pass than he returned in triumph. The Parliament of Paris soon submitted; the nobles returned to

their allegiance; and the court came back to Paris, where the king was warmly welcomed, but where Mazarin continued to be greatly disliked. Instead of making open war, however, his foes now vented their spite by writing and publishing lampoons against him, which were known as "Mazarinades," a name now generally applied to political satires.

Condé, the only nobleman who refused to submit, went off to join the forces of Spain in Flanders, where Turenne faced him in several small encounters, and finally defeated him in the great battle of the Downs (Dunes), near Dunkirk. Knowing the obstinacy and incapacity of his Spanish troops, Condé felt sure beforehand that there was no hope of winning a victory on this occasion; so he remarked to a bystander, "Were you ever in a battle, my lord?"

"No," was the answer.

"Well, then, in the course of the next half hour, you will see us lose one!"

Shortly after this battle, the treaty of the Pyrenees (1659) ended the war between France and Spain. It left France in possession of her conquests, but provided that the great Condé should be pardoned and restored to his offices. It also settled the king's marriage, as we shall see later on.

LXXXIII. DEATH OF MAZARIN

LOUIS XIV. is noted for having been very handsome in his youth, with a profusion of curling golden hair, which he wore long, a style his courtiers promptly imi-

tated, resorting to wigs (*péruques*) when nature did not provide them with sufficiently luxuriant locks. Owing to an illness which left him nearly bald in youth, Louis XIV. also wore wigs, which became larger and curlier as time went on. All the portraits of the day, therefore, show us smooth or mustached faces, fairly embedded in clustering curls, which only experienced hairdressers could keep in order.

Besides natural good looks, Louis had also charming manners, on which he greatly prided himself. His courtiers related with bated breath that he even took off his hat to a chambermaid, if he happened to meet one on his way! Not only did Louis's courtesy win him many friends, but it was imitated by all around him, the nobles in particular striving to become as polite and dignified as their king. Thus "grand manners" became the rule at court and in all fashionable assemblies in France.

Louis XIV. at an early age began to show great fondness for female society, and soon fell desperately in love with one of Mazarin's nieces. The cardinal realized that a King of France must contract a royal alliance, so he promptly broke up this love affair by sending his niece away. When the young king heard that his ladylove was to leave court, he was broken-hearted; but the damsel hotly reproached him for his idle tears at parting, exclaiming indignantly, "*You* are king, and do nothing but weep, so *I* must go away!"

Mazarin hoped for a marriage between Louis XIV. and Maria Theresa, one of the Spanish princesses, or infantas; and in the treaty of the Pyrenees he secured an agreement to bring this about. He then hastened to the queen mother's room, announcing triumphantly, "Madam, we

have both peace and the Infanta!" for he knew how greatly such tidings would please Anne of Austria, who had bewailed the long quarrel with Spain.

But before the marriage could be concluded, the young Spanish princess had to renounce all right to the Spanish crown, that is to say, promise that neither she nor her children would ever claim it. Mazarin, however, shrewdly arranged that this renunciation should be valid only in case the queen's huge dowry were paid in full; and as the Spanish court failed to pay, this promise was considered invalid later on.

When all had been settled, the court proceeded in state to the frontier to welcome the new queen, and the marriage was celebrated when the king was only twenty years old. Though Louis's young wife was undeniably handsome, he never felt great interest in her, and soon began to neglect her, thus setting a pernicious example to his court and people.

Mazarin, who steered the ship of state so cleverly through the troubled waters occasioned by the end of the Thirty Years' War and the Fronde, somewhat neglected French finances, navy, and commerce during the nineteen years of his ministry. But this neglect was not wholly intentional, for he was generally anxious to do his best for his adopted country, and often said, "My heart is French, though my language is not."

Many interesting anecdotes are related about him. For instance, when pressed for time, Mazarin once promised to give audience to one of the many petitioners constantly besieging his door, if the man would make known his wants in two words. As soon as admitted, this

man stared at the cardinal, then at the fire, and gasped, "Cold! hungry!" With ready wit Mazarin rejoined, "Fire! bread!" and dismissed the petitioner after bestowing upon him a pension sufficient for his immediate needs.

Mazarin was a great lover of letters and art, and during his lifetime accumulated considerable wealth and many

Painting by Vetter.

Mazarin.

art treasures, including a number of pictures by the old masters. He was so fond of these masterpieces that, on learning his end was near, he had them all brought to him in turn, and took leave of them, saying, "Farewell, dear pictures that I have loved so dearly and that have cost me so much!" Then he arranged that the majority of them should always remain in France; and many of the art treasures now in the Louvre are due to him.

In his last talk with his young king, the prime minister

gave him good advice, saying impressively: "Sire, know how to respect yourself, and you will be respected. Never have a prime minister, but employ Colbert (cōl-bâr′) whenever you require the assistance of an adviser at once intelligent and devoted." A few moments later, he added, "I owe you everything, Sire, but I believe I am canceling my obligations to your Majesty by giving you Colbert."

Mazarin is also known as the founder of a fine library, and of the College of the Four Nations, as well as for having annexed to France three important provinces (Artois, Alsace, and Roussillon).

LXXXIV. VERSAILLES

MAZARIN was dead! The strong hand which had guided affairs of state so long had dropped from the helm, and the subordinate ministers, not knowing what to do, turned in bewilderment to Louis XIV., asking, "To whom shall we apply, henceforth, for orders?" Louis XIV., then just twenty-two, mindful of Mazarin's last recommendations, drew himself up and quietly answered, "To me."

The king was ambitious and persevering, duly impressed by his important position, and determined to practice faithfully what he himself termed "his trade as king." He therefore set immediately to work, and for fifty-four years labored regularly eight hours a day at his self-imposed task, presiding over every council, deciding every matter in person, and not allowing any paper to leave the palace without his approval.

As Louis's natural abilities were far above the average, this close attention to business bore good fruit. People soon began to see the truth of Mazarin's statements: "There is in him stuff enough for four kings and for one honest man!" and, "He may start out late, but he will go farther than any one else!" These predictions time was to verify, for the reign of Louis XIV. proved the most glorious, as well as the longest, in French history.

From the death of Mazarin (1661) until his own death (1715) Louis had no prime minister, but personally exercised the chief authority in the country. Because everything centered thus in him, he too, as well as Francis I. (see page 244), is often considered the founder of absolute monarchy in France, or of the system generally known as the Old Régime; indeed, it is even said that Louis XIV. once declared, "I am the state" ("*L'état c'est moi*"). His first speech on assuming the government was: "Gentlemen, I have called you together to tell you that up to the present day I have been willing to allow the deceased cardinal to regulate my affairs. Hereafter I intend to be my own prime minister. You will aid me by your counsels whenever I shall ask for them, and I beg and command you, Mr. Chancellor, not to seal any documents save by my orders, and you, my Secretary of State, and Superintendent of Finances, never to sign anything save by my orders."

Louis XIV. was so arbitrary because he believed in "the divine right of kings," and because he was also firmly convinced "that it is the will of God that he who is born a subject should obey and make no question." His overweening opinion of his own position and intelli-

gence helped to make him a great historical figure, but later on led also to disaster.

Because he had been frightened by the riots of the Fronde in his early childhood, Louis did not wish to settle in Paris; and, because the palaces in the neighborhood (Fontainebleau, St. Germain, etc.) bore too clearly the imprint of previous kings, he resolved to transform his father's modest hunting castle at Versailles into a

Versailles.

dwelling worthy of himself. In 1661, therefore, the construction of the present palace was begun. The work was planned by famous architects, the ceilings and walls decorated by the best painters of the day, the gardens laid out by a famous landscape gardener, and adorned with statues by noted sculptors. Water in profusion, to feed the many fountains and artificial lakes, was brought from a distance, full-grown trees were transplanted from remote forests, and everything was done to create an abode which all the other sovereigns envied and sought to copy, and which

served, in a way, as a model for the construction of countless other edifices in Europe. To accomplish all this in a barren plain, required a host of workmen as well as a mint of money, but the king considered nothing but his pleasure.

From 1661 to 1710 additions and extensions were constantly made to Versailles, until the palace became one of the show places of the world. The cost of all this magnificence has been estimated at about four hundred million dollars of our money to-day, so you can readily imagine that it is a place which must be seen if one wishes to have any conception of its extent and beauty. The creation of Louis XIV., it bears at every turn the imprint of his taste; but since 1837 it has been a national museum, open to all, and has been filled with priceless treasures of art in addition to those secured by its founder.

In this palace there were apartments for all the members of the royal family, with quarters for their suites, guards, and attendants, besides lodgings for the principal officers of the court, and for the guests and favorites of royalty. Nobles who were not lodged there built villas and palaces in the neighborhood, so as to be able to appear daily at court; for if nobles failed to pay frequent homage to the king, he was apt to remark coldly when their names were mentioned, "I do not know them."

The French court took up its abode in Versailles in 1682, and for the next century this palace was not only the home of the king, but also the center of government in France. It may interest you to hear how Louis XIV. spent his days in this ideal residence, and to learn what etiquette ruled his court. The first thing in the morning

the doors were flung wide open to admit the waiting crowd of courtiers. These were "the grand entries" (*grandes entrées*), when all who wished to see the king flocked into an antechamber, known as the Bull's Eye (Œil de Bœuf) on account of its oval window.

Special favorites were thence admitted to the king's bedroom, to witness his morning toilet (*petit lever*). As soon as this was over, the king, richly clad, emerged to greet the waiting throng, and, attended by an obsequious court, proceeded to chapel to hear mass. After service he was escorted back in state to the room where he gave audience to those waiting to confer with him, before presiding over his council. Being very punctual himself, Louis always insisted upon great promptness, and once, when one of his ministers entered the council room by another door just as he appeared, he haughtily remarked, "Sir, I almost had to wait!"

It was customary for the king to eat his one o'clock dinner in state. He sat alone at a table under the royal canopy, while the various members of the royal family, the princes and invited guests, dined at other tables. During this meal, any one — if clean and neatly dressed — was allowed to pass through the hall to gaze at the king; and the courtiers made it a point to be in attendance, for the king's brother, or in case of his absence, the next in rank, had the exalted privilege of handing Louis XIV. his napkin!

After dinner the crowd followed the king down the great staircase to the beautiful grounds for an afternoon walk, the gentlemen being granted permission to don their hats — until then held in the hand or tucked under

the arm — by a gracious gesture and the words, "Your hats, gentlemen!"

After a walk, drive, or hunt, for the sake of sociability and exercise, the king was again closeted with his ministers; and the busy day was followed by a concert, play, or ball. The sumptuous royal supper, to which the king invited any guest he pleased, was always served at ten o'clock. At bedtime, after taking ceremonious leave of the main part of his courtiers in the antechamber, the king was solemnly escorted to his room by a select few; and one courtier was finally allowed each evening to hold the royal candlestick while his Majesty said his prayers and climbed into bed!

All day long the Versailles courtiers vied with one another in attentions to the king and to the court ladies, conversing gayly and exchanging witty remarks. In fact life at court was so brilliant, that the worst disgrace which could befall a member of the aristocracy was to incur royal displeasure and to be banished from Versailles. There was, therefore, no extravagance that lords and ladies were not ready to commit to win the king's attention or favor, and no flattery too fulsome to be lavished upon him. One courtier, walking with the king in the gardens of Marly (mar-lee′) and overtaken there by a shower, was heard to assure his master, "Ah, Sire, Marly rain does not wet!" When Louis became old and complained that he had no teeth, a young lord, though himself well supplied with them, boldly exclaimed, "Ah, Sire, who is there, then, that has any teeth?" Even a cook committed suicide because the fish one day did not arrive in time for the king's dinner!

LXXXV. THE IRON MASK

AS we have seen, Louis began his independent reign by proceeding to supervise everything himself, but his principal adviser was Colbert, who had served Mazarin, and was therefore well posted about all government matters. Colbert soon informed the young monarch that there was something amiss in regard to Fouquet (foo-kĕ′), minister of finance, who, beginning his duties as a poor man, was at the end of a few years noted for great wealth. At first the king would not credit such tales, but before Mazarin had been in his grave many months Fouquet's stealings became too glaring to be ignored, and his fall came about in a dramatic way.

It seems that Fouquet once invited the king to his country home, where the great magnificence of his establishment eclipsed everything that had hitherto been seen at court. Louis XIV., who expected to be first in everything, gazed around him in wondering displeasure, and showed his wrath by remarking coldly, "I shall never again, sir, venture to invite you to visit me, for you would find yourself inconvenienced!" Still apparently polite and well entertained, Louis soon came to the conclusion that all this wealth could not have been obtained by honest means. It is possible, however, that Fouquet would only have been deprived of office, had not the king discovered that his dishonest minister dared to rival him in another line.

Louis had recently begun to pay court to a beautiful young lady, Mademoiselle de La Vallière (mȧd-mwȧ-zĕl′ dē lȧ vȧ-lyâr′), over whose graceful head he once, at a picnic, held his plumed hat to protect her from a summer shower.

Painting by Morlon.

Louis XIV. and Mademoiselle de La Vallière.

The king's infatuation was no secret, so no one else ventured to pay this lady attentions, for fear of arousing royal jealousy. It is said, however, that Fouquet, also smitten with this fair lady's charms, secreted her portrait in a private room, where it was closely covered by a curtain, so that the gaze of the vulgar might never rest upon it.

By some accident Louis went into this very apartment, where his attention was naturally attracted by the shrouded painting. Wishing to gratify his curiosity, the king quickly pushed aside the curtain, and so discovered the full extent of his minister's perfidy. In his wrath, the king soon after had Fouquet arrested, and confiscated all his possessions.

Nineteen years later, it was publicly reported that Fouquet had died in one of the king's fortresses. But about the same time a mysterious prisoner was first mentioned

in France. This man, evidently some important personage, was treated with great respect by his jailers, but no one was ever allowed to converse privately with him, or even to catch a glimpse of his face, which was always covered by a velvet mask. As this mask was black, it was said to be of iron, and, because no name was ever given to this captive, he was popularly known as "the Iron Mask." Many stories are told about him, some of which you will like to hear.

From one fortress to another this prisoner traveled through France, each governor being obliged in turn to answer with his life for the man's safe detention. For a time the Iron Mask was locked up in a tower overlooking the sea, and one day, it is said, he managed to scratch a few words on a silver dish, which he flung through the bars out of his window. A poor fisherman, casting his nets in that neighborhood, drew up this silver vessel, which he immediately carried to the castle, in hopes of securing a rich reward. He obstinately refused, however, to give it up or even to show it to any one save the governor, who, on catching sight of the words scratched on the smooth silver surface, turned ghastly pale. Finding, however, by close cross-questioning, that the fisherman did not know how to read, and had not shown his find to any one, the governor congratulated the man upon his ignorance and caution, grimly declaring that to them he owed his life.

In time the Iron Mask was conveyed to the Bastille in Paris, where he died in 1703, after being, some say twenty-four, and others forty-three, years a prisoner. But even then the mystery was not revealed, for we are told that no one was permitted to see the dead man's features.

The Man in the Iron Mask is one of the great puzzles in history, because no great person is known to have disappeared at that time. There are many theories about him, but as no positive proof exists that any one of these is correct, you may think what you please. Dumas (dü-mä′), the great French novelist, romantically asserted that the Man with the Iron Mask was a twin brother of Louis XIV., so exactly like him that they could not be told apart. He claimed that this prince was kept in prison lest trouble should arise for the state, but that if anything untoward had happened during Louis XIV.'s minority, his twin brother would undoubtedly have been put in his place, without any one suspecting the substitution.

Another theory is that this man was Fouquet, who, although his death had been openly announced, was still made to suffer for having dared to raise his eyes to the king's favorite, if not for having robbed the state!

A third supposition — the least romantic, but most plausible — is that a secretary of the Duke of Man′tua, trying to cheat the French government, was secretly seized and imprisoned by Louis's orders. These are only three out of many versions of the story of the mysterious prisoner, to which you will find many allusions both in history and in fiction.

LXXXVI. LOUIS XIV.'S EARLY CAMPAIGNS

THE garden party given by the dishonest Fouquet was not the only great outdoor entertainment of the time. About a year after, the court held a fine pageant, called

Carrousel (çar-oo-zĕl′) on the square before the Louvre, which ever since has been known by that name. On this occasion, a quadrille on horseback was danced by the courtiers, all dressed with the utmost magnificence to represent characters in myth and allegory. Even the king and queen appeared in fancy costume, and Louis, having elected to personate the sun, wore $2,500,000 worth of diamonds, which flashed and glittered so that they won for him the title of "King Sun" (*le Roi Soleil*), by which he was generally known thereafter. This brilliant social event is the subject of a painting which now adorns the picture gallery of Versailles.

Being young, the king greatly enjoyed stir and activity, and, anxious to shine in every field, he was not at all sorry when a pretext arose for a war with Spain (1667). You remember, do you not, that Louis had married a Spanish princess? Her father had now just died, leaving all his lands to her little step-brother; but Louis XIV. claimed that while this child undoubtedly had a right to the crown of Spain, he had none whatever to the Spanish Netherlands (now Belgium), which by Flemish law should devolve instead upon the children of the first wife.

As the Spaniards were not ready to agree to this, war resulted, and Louis went off to join his army, which in a few weeks' time conquered Flanders and Franche-Comté (fränsh-côn-tā′). So little fighting was done, however, in this campaign, that it was playfully said, "Louis might have sent his valet to take possession of the country in his name, and have saved himself the trouble of going in person!" But if Louis did not have a chance to distinguish himself in battle, he received as many compliments

as if he had done wonderful things, and greatly enjoyed his novel experiences.

The war of "the Devolution of Flanders," which was little more than a military promenade, was concluded by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which added a piece of land to France in the north. It soon led, however, to another conflict, with Holland (1672–1678), which was waged partly because Louis's vanity was sorely wounded by the fun the Dutch made of his recent campaign, and partly because the Dutch navy kept interfering with the commerce of France.

Once more "King Sun" set out at the head of his army, splendidly organized by his war minister, Louvois (loo-vwä′), severely drilled by Martinet′ and others (whence a strict disciplinarian is still often termed "a Martinet"), and magnificently generaled by the great Condé, Turenne, and others.

A tremendous fuss was made at court when news came that the French army had forded the Rhine and had driven away the troops guarding the passage. Poems were written about it, and great speeches made, for stay-at-homes fancied that the king and his army had breasted the waves at the risk of their lives, whereas, in fact, the French had merely forded a shallow part of the stream, almost unopposed by the enemy.

Town after town was captured. The Hollanders, unprepared for an invasion, then tried to compromise; and their great statesmen, the De Witt brothers, corresponded actively with Louvois on this subject. In fact, had not the Hollanders suddenly overthrown the existing government, torn the De Witts to pieces, and placed William of Orange

at the head of affairs, these negotiations might have resulted favorably. This William of Orange, however, was an excellent and uncompromising leader. When he saw that the French had nearly reached Am'sterdam, he did not hesitate to have the dikes broken and flood the country! This move checked the advance of the French, and gave William ample time to secure the alliance of both Spain and Germany to continue the war.

When the German princes began to threaten the north-eastern frontier of France, Louis changed his plans, and for the second time conquered Franche-Comté. In later campaigns, Condé won the battle of Seneffe (sē-nĕf′, 1674) over the Prince of Orange, and Turenne — who had done wonders in many smaller engagements — was killed at Sasbach (zäs'bäk, 1675).

The cannon ball which killed Turenne carried off at the same time the arm of one of his officers. When this man's son was trying to comfort him, he quickly replied: "You should not weep for me, but for the death of this great man. You may love your father, but neither you nor the country will ever find such a general again!" As for the soldiers, when they heard Turenne was dead, they all wailed, "Our father is dead; we are lost!" The general whom they thus almost worshiped was buried first at St. Denis, among the French kings, and then in a chapel of the Invalides (ăn-vä-leed′), where his tomb is second in interest only to that of Napoleon.

It may interest you to read a few ancedotes about the brave general, who is one of the great French heroes. For instance, Turenne was noted for always keeping his

promises. Once, when held up by highwaymen, he begged them not to take a ring he wore, offering to give them more than it was worth, if they would only call at his house for the money. When he was freed on these terms, some one suggested that he should use this opportunity to have the thieves arrested; but Turenne indignantly refused, saying: "The promise of an honest man is inviolable. He should never fail to keep his word, even if he did give it to rascals!"

Another time, when dressed in white, Turenne was vigorously clapped on the shoulder by a valet, who mistook him for the cook. Suddenly perceiving his error, the offender fell down on his knees, gasping, "My lord, I thought you were George!" But, instead of the angry dismissal he expected, he heard only the calm rejoinder, "Well, even had I been George, you need not have hit so hard!"

While Turenne knew the sense of fear, he never yielded to it. Once, when about to mount his horse, he perceived that his knees were shaking violently, and remarked with a queer smile, "If my knees only knew where I am going to take them, they would shake even harder!" Besides physical courage, Turenne possessed what is much rarer, true moral courage. Thus, he stanchly refused to fight a duel, simply because it was against the law. When his opponent taunted him with cowardice, Turenne proposed that they should undertake, in common, some perilous adventure for the country's good, saying proudly, "Let us see which of us will best carry it out!"

In one battle Turenne noticed that his staff seemed mortified because they could not help ducking when a cannon

ball whistled over their heads. Always genial and sympathetic, he tactfully cried: "Boys, you are right. Such visitors well deserve a curtsy!"

Before this war ended, the French admiral Duquesne (dü-kān′) won several naval battles in the Mediterranean, but received neither praise nor reward for this triumph, simply because he was a Huguenot, — a sect not in favor at court. In protesting against such unfair treatment, Duquesne was heard to mutter, "It is true that I am a Protestant, but I thought that my services were Catholic!"

The Porte St. Denis.

The treaty of Nim′wegen (1678), which ended the war with Holland, extended the boundaries of France on the north and on the west. It also marked the highest point of the reign of Louis XIV., whom his people thereafter proudly termed "Louis the Great" and "the Great Monarch" (*le grand Monarque*). It was in commemoration of his military feats in this campaign that Louis XIV. erected two permanent triumphal arches (Porte St. Denis and Porte St.

Martin) in Paris, where they still stand, the admiration of all who behold them.

LXXXVII. MADAME DE MAINTENON

THANKS to Louis XIV.'s executive ability, and to his famous helpers, Colbert and Louvois, the period from 1674 to 1689 proved most prosperous for France. In fact, the country progressed more in those fifteen years than it did in the next hundred.

After Fouquet's disgrace, Colbert became minister of finances and was charged to watch over the commercial, agricultural, and industrial interests of the country. Although it was Colbert's office to supply money enough for the king's wars, buildings, and other extravagances, he earnestly tried to diminish and equalize the taxes, and to check a dangerous tendency to borrow money. He also encouraged the planting of flax and cotton, and of mulberry trees (for the silkworm industry), had roads built, and supplied funds for digging the great canal which connects the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean (Canal du Languedoc). He also founded factories for making cloth, silk, mirrors, tapestry, carpets, lace, etc., and encouraged and protected the French colonies, which until his day had been rather neglected.

Colbert faithfully served the king from Mazarin's death until his own in 1683, although his last days were saddened by the knowledge that Louvois had supplanted him in the royal favor. When a letter from the king was handed to him on his death bed, he refused to read it, saying bitterly,

like Wolsey:[1] "I will not hear the king spoken of again. Let me die in peace. It is to the King of Kings I now have to answer. Had I done for God what I have done for that man, I should have found salvation ten times over, and now I do not know what will become of me!" The people wrongly blamed Colbert for the heavy taxes, and hated him so intensely that they would have liked to insult his remains; he therefore had to be buried secretly at night. But he is now generally recognized as the creator of French industry, commerce, navy, and finances.

Louvois, of whom the dying Colbert was so jealous, not only reformed the army but established the famous naval ports of Brest and Toulon (too-lôN′), and by diplomatic arts enabled France to take possession of the city of Strassburg in time of peace without striking a single blow (1681). For nearly two hundred years thereafter this fortified town belonged to France, and was one of the principal French strongholds on the northeast.

The defenses of Strassburg were greatly strengthened by Vauban (vō-bäN′), — Louis's great military engineer, — who is said to have created an "iron frontier" by repairing five hundred old forts and building fifty-five new ones. He is also said to have been present at fifty-three sieges, and to have taken part in one hundred and forty-three engagements. His talents were such that French people said, "A city besieged by Vauban is a taken city; a city fortified by Vauban is an impregnable city!" Although personally bold to the verge of foolhardiness, Vauban was always careful of his men's lives, and so loyal a Frenchman that he earned the title of "Patriot."

[1] See *Story of the English*, p. 214.

War having ceased at home after the treaty of Nimwegen, Louis turned his attention to the serious depredations of the Bar'bary pirates, and put an end to them by sending a fleet to bombard Algiers', Tunis, and Trip'oli, and to liberate the Christian captives detained there in hard slavery. Then, having discovered that the people of Genoa had secretly supplied these pirates with ammunition, Louis next had that city bombarded also, and refused to make peace until the Doge (president of the republic) came in person to Versailles to apologize. The constitution of Genoa, however, strictly forbade the Doge's leaving this city while in office, so when a courtier asked him what surprised him most among all the wonders he beheld at Versailles, he simply and truthfully answered, "It is to see myself here!"

Maria Theresa, Louis's queen, died in 1683. Although Louis had not been a good husband, he had always treated her with outward courtesy, and when she had passed away, he said, "God has deprived me of a consort who never gave me any cause for grief except by her death." She had done her duty by giving her husband a son to inherit the crown; but the court made only a pretense of mourning her death.

Tired of favorites,—one of whom, Madame de Montespan', had much influence over him for many years,—Louis XIV. at last secretly married the governess of his children, Madame de Maintenon (măN-t'-nôN'), a lady whom the courtiers punningly called Madame de Maintenant (măN-t'-näN')— meaning the present madam. She was, however, never openly recognized as queen, although she was often present at the royal council, and the king

frequently asked for her opinion, calling her playfully, "Your Solidity" and "Your Reason." Of noble birth, although extremely poor, Madame de Maintenon had been glad, when only sixteen, to marry a sickly, hunchbacked poet (Scarron), who lived only eight years after their marriage. In his house she proved such a witty and entertaining host-

Painting by Sylvestre.

Louis XIV. and Madame de Maintenon receiving at Court.

ess that all the most noted people came to visit her. Sometimes, when the poor poet's modest table was insufficiently supplied to satisfy the appetites of so many guests, the waiter — knowing his mistress's fascinating arts — would whisper, "Another story, please, madam, for the roast is too small to-day!"

A woman whose brilliant conversation could make hun-

gry people forget to eat was, of course, able to amuse the old king, who, having tired of everything, was apt to be capricious and easily bored. But as Madame de Maintenon was very devout, she insisted upon Louis being pious too, and encouraged the clergy to appear at court. She also helped to persuade the king that it was his duty to stamp out Protestantism in his realm.

You remember, do you not, that ever since the Edict of Nantes, granted by Henry IV., the Protestants had been permitted to hold their form of worship in France? They were still most numerous in the south, and had by this time increased in numbers to such an extent that there were more than a million Huguenots in France. Louis XIV. tried to convert these people, at first by persuasion, and then by force, actually sending dragoons to live in their houses and annoy them until they renounced their religion, — a system of persecution which is known as the "Dragonnades."

Next, the king revoked the Edict of Nantes (1685), decreed that no more Huguenot worship should be permitted in France, ordered that all Protestant ministers should be forced to leave the country, and forbade any other Huguenots to follow them. The result of the Dragonnades, and of the harsh edict of revocation, was that many Protestants perished, about two hundred thousand escaped, and the rest feigned conversion for the sake of peace.

As the Huguenot emigrants were largely of the industrial class, France was greatly impoverished by their loss, while neighboring countries were correspondingly enriched. Lyons, for instance, which had boasted of 18,000 silk looms before the persecution began, had only 4000 in operation when it was over; moreover, Protestants everywhere re-

sented the cruel treatment their brethren had suffered in France, so that Louis thus created many bitter enemies abroad.

LXXXVIII. LATER WARS OF LOUIS XIV.

LOUIS XIV. not only paid Charles II. of England a yearly sum of money to favor French policies, but also encouraged Charles's successor, James II., in his attempts to rule as an absolute monarch and to convert the English to Catholicism. This roused an English revolt. Louis's old foe, William of Orange, crossed over to England, and when James II. fled, gladly accepted the crown tendered to him and to his wife — a daughter of the deposed king. James naturally turned to Louis for a home during his exile, as well as for means to recover the throne for himself and his infant son, — later known in England as "the Old Pretender." [1]

Thus Louis XIV. became involved in war with England, while William headed the League of Augs'burg against him, having secured the aid of Germany, Spain, Holland, and Sweden. As a result, France waged war (1688–1697), against great odds, and this struggle marks the beginning of the Great Monarch's decline. Until then, Louis had always gone to war in person, but he now sent the Dauphin in his stead, saying: "My son, in sending you to command my armies, I afford you an opportunity of making your merits known. Go, and so act in the face of Europe, that when I am no more it shall not perceive that the king is dead!"

[1] See *Story of the English*, p. 300.

The war was waged on all sides of France at once, and for years we hear of nothing but battles and destruction. The French, for instance, ravaged the Rhine country and ruined many castles there. Then, against England were fought the naval battles of Beachy Head (1689), La Hogue (lȧ ōg′, 1692), and Cape St. Vincent (1693), in which the great French admiral Tourville (toor-veel′) and other sailors won many laurels. But one of these mariners, Jean Bart, showed his great conceit when the king remarked one day, "I wish I had ten thousand men like you!" by coolly replying, "I can well believe it, Sire."

In 1690 a great land battle was fought at Fleurus (flē-rüs′), where the French general, Luxembourg,— a hunchback, — won a brilliant victory over the Imperialists, capturing many standards, which were hung in the church of Notre Dame in Paris. Another victory of his so irritated William of Orange that he angrily exclaimed, "Shall I then never beat this accursed hunchback?" When this exclamation was repeated to Luxembourg, he proudly cried: "Hunchback! What does *he* know about it? He has never seen my back!" He further proved his courage by winning two more battles (Stein′kirk, 1692, and Neerwinden, 1693) over this same foe, while Catinat (cȧ-te-nȧ′), another famous French general, won a battle in Italy over the Duke of Savoy.

In spite of all these victories, the cost of the war proved so great, and the losses so heavy, that Louis XIV. was glad to put an end to hostilities by the treaty of Rys′wick (1697), whereby he gave up all his recent conquests — save Strassburg — and promised no longer to support

James II. in his vain attempts to recover the English throne.[1] This treaty of Ryswick, however necessary to France and acceptable to the rest of Europe, was intensely disappointing to Vauban, who dejectedly said, "We have always beaten the enemy, and yet we make a peace which dishonors the king and the nation!"

While the war was going on, Louis XIV. spent most of his time at Versailles, directing everything and working hard on his plans for the erection of the Hôtel des Invalides and of the Louvre Colonnade. His principal recreation consisted in hearing the plays written by Molière (mo-lyâr′), Corneille, and Racine (ra-seen′). He also took an interest in helping Madame de Maintenon found St. Cyr (săn seer′), at the other end of the park of Versailles, a boarding school for the daughters of his officers. (The institution now bearing the name St. Cyr is for young men only, and furnishes officers for the army.) When these damsels left school, their patroness often arranged marriages for them, and even supplied their dowries.

Now, as Madame de Maintenon had no money of her own, it was only by interesting the king in this establishment that she could obtain the funds to continue her good work. She therefore asked the poet Racine to write tragedies which the young ladies could play before the king, introducing choruses so that all the pupils could take part at once. As a result of this request, we have the two famous tragedies of *Athalie* (ä-tä-lee′) and *Esther*, based on episodes of Old Testament history, and hence suited to the youthful actresses who first played them.[2]

[1] See *Story of the English*, pp. 283–290.

[2] See *Story of the Chosen People*, pp. 183–185, 216–220.

The king, although old, still kept open court, insisting upon the nobles appearing there frequently. Indeed, even elderly peers were not exempt. Once, when the gouty Condé slowly advanced to meet the waiting king, he had to excuse himself by saying, "Sire, I beg your Majesty's pardon for keeping you waiting." The king on this occasion graciously replied: "Do not hurry, cousin. When one is so weighted with laurels, one cannot, of course, proceed any faster!" To an unfortunate general, broken-hearted at having to capitulate, and fearing the royal wrath, Louis once kindly said, "Marquis, you showed your *courage* in the defense, and your *wisdom* in the capitulation."

Arbitrary as Louis was, he occasionally showed that he did not object to hearing the truth. Once, for instance, when he insisted upon pardoning a criminal, his chancellor objected, and only upon the king's positive order produced the seals. But when Louis handed them back, the chancellor proudly refused to accept them, declaring they had been defiled! This made the king pause and think, after which he flung the paper he had just sealed into the fire. Delighted at having thus made justice prevail, the chancellor rapturously cried, "I take back the seals, Sire, for fire purifies everything."

LXXXIX. THE SPANISH SUCCESSION.

THE beginning of the new century (eighteenth) was marked by the outbreak of a new war, known in history as the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1713).

You must understand clearly how it came to be fought. You remember that at the death of the King of Spain, who was Maria Theresa's father, the King of France had claimed part of his inheritance in the Netherlands. Now, the queen's step-brother also died, leaving no direct heir to the Spanish crown, but stating in his will that he wished Maria Theresa's second grandson, Philip, the Duke of Anjou, to succeed him.

The French were delighted to have a prince of France accept this crown, provided it were arranged that France and Spain should never be united; but the other nations, fearing lest such a promise should be disregarded, and one monarch become in time so dangerously strong as to threaten the peace of Europe, opposed the Spanish king's will with all their might.

After due consideration, Louis XIV. bade his young grandson accept the crown offered to him, and announced this decision by presenting him to the French court, thus: "Gentlemen, here is the King of Spain!" Then he pronounced a famous speech, in which he told the youth to rule wisely and be true to Spain, yet never to forget the ties of birth which bound him to France, from which even the Pyrenees could not divide him! This speech gave rise to the oft-quoted, grandiloquent saying, "There are no more Pyrenees," or "The Pyrenees have disappeared!"

By accepting the Spanish king's will, many people claimed that Louis XIV. had violated his wife's renunciation, but others asserted that, as her dower had never been paid in full, there was nothing binding about this promise (see page 326). Europe in general, however, rose up in arms against France and Spain. William III. again

headed the League, and its armies were ably led by the two great generals, Marl'borough and Prince Eugene of Savoy. The latter, it is said, had once offered his services to Louis XIV., only to be scorned on account of his small stature, a mistake that was to cost France dear.

Villars (vee-lär'), a famous French general, won the battle of Hochstädt (hōĸ'shtĕt, 1703), while one of his countrymen won another. Then luck turned, and the allies gained victories in three battles (Blenheim, 1704, Ramillies, and Turin, 1706). After the second of these engagements, Louis XIV. comforted his defeated general, Villeroi (veel-rwä'), by exclaiming, "Mr. Marshal, at our age fortune no longer favors us," — alluding, of course, to the popular saying, "Fortune favors the young."

The news of these defeats caused great dismay in France; but, confident that they would triumph in the end, the French went on singing a mocking song about Marlborough, which is still familiar in French nurseries to-day (*Malbrook s'en va-t'en guerre*). Then a victory in Spain (1707) again raised French spirits, only to be followed the succeeding year by a crushing defeat at Oudenar'de in the Netherlands.

This was followed by a winter of such unusual severity that the army suffered untold hardships, and Louis XIV. had to beg for peace. But when the allies refused to grant it unless he helped drive his own grandson out of Spain, he bravely answered, "Since I *must* fight, I had rather fight my enemies than my children!"

The war was therefore renewed, and the French lost the battle of Malplaquet (mäl-plä-kĕ', 1709). But the

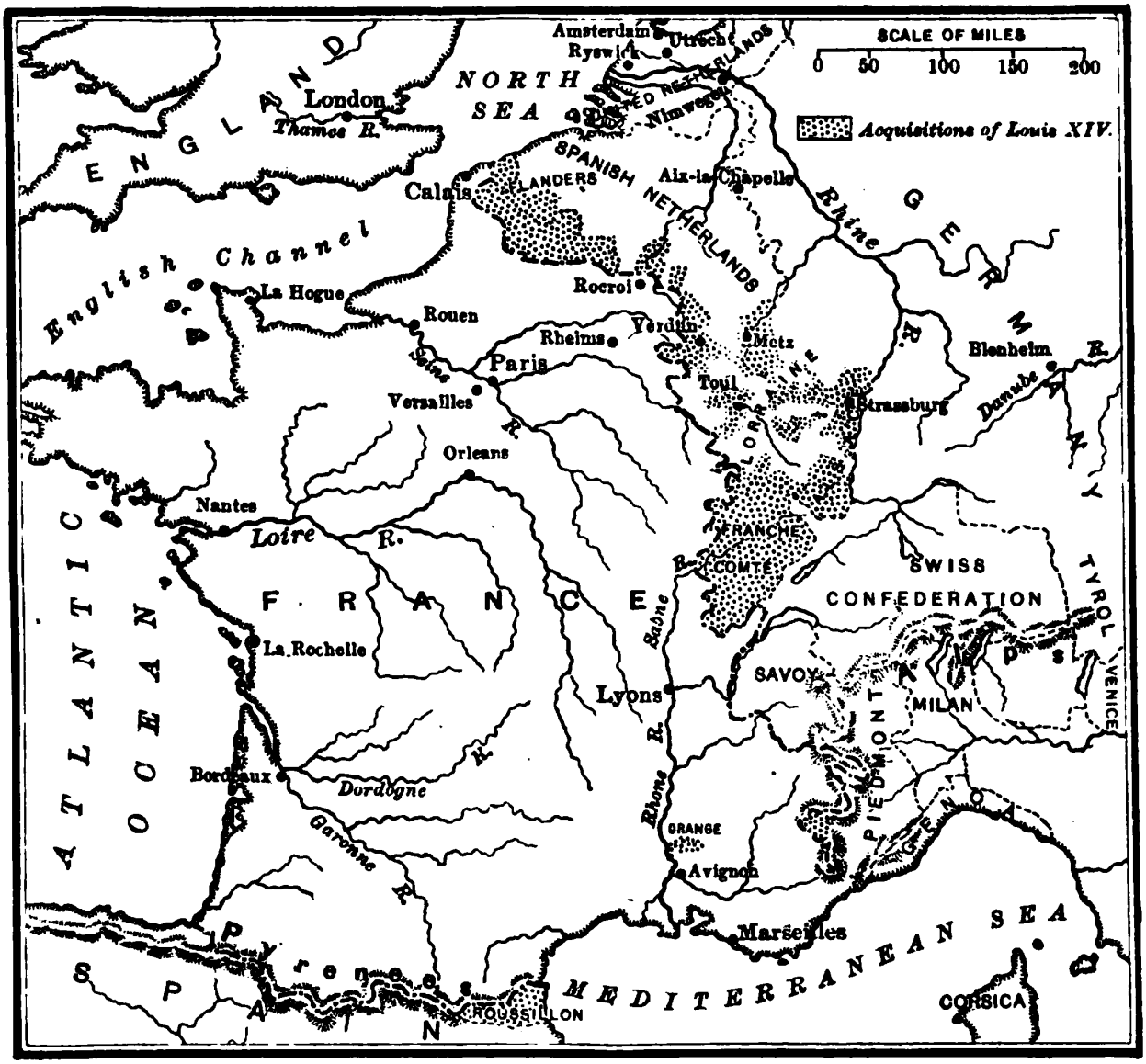
next year Louis's grandson, Philip V. of Spain, won a triumph (Villaviciosa); and soon afterwards England withdrew from the struggle, leaving France with one foe less. The year 1712 saw Villars victor at Denain (dĕ-năn′), and in 1713 the treaty of Utrecht (ū′trĕkt) put an end to the War of the Spanish Succession. By this treaty Philip V. was left in possession of all Spain — except Gibraltar — and of Spain's colonies in America. The other lands which had once belonged to the Spanish crown — the Spanish Netherlands, Milan, Naples, Sardin′ia, Sicily, and Minor′ca — now went to various countries, and Louis XIV. ceded to England the Hudson Bay region, Newfoundland, and Aca′dia.

The three great treaties signed during the reign of Louis XIV. — Nimwegen, Ryswick, and Utrecht — were unsatisfactory to the German Imperialists, who, punning on these Dutch names, said that it had all been a case of "Take away, tear away, and wrongdoing" (*Nimm-weg*, *reiss-weg*, and *unrecht*).

You will not be surprised, after what you have heard about him, to learn that two favorite sayings of Louis XIV. were "Self-aggrandisement is the noblest occupation of kings," and "Kings give by spending." The many wars of his reign, added to his building extravagances, had been steadily running the country deeper and deeper into debt, besides making the taxes heavier and heavier. It was computed that the French nation, then numbering about 19,000,000 souls, had a public debt of about $300,000,000!

Both king and government were poor; the nobles, who had long lived beyond their means, were no better off; the

middle class suffered from the ruin of commerce; and the overtaxed peasants, lacking the means to cultivate the land, allowed great stretches to run to waste.



France: Acquisitions in the Reign of Louis XIV.

XC. THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV.

BECAUSE so many great men lived in France during this long reign, "the Age of Louis XIV." is as famous in France as is the Age of Per'icles in Greek

history, or the Age of Augustus in Roman annals,[1] or the Age of Elizabeth in England. You have already heard of the great generals Turenne, Condé, Luxembourg, Catinat, and Villars; of the great admirals Duquesne, Tourville, and Jean Bart; of the ministers Colbert and Louvois; of the engineer Vauban; and of some famous architects, painters, sculptors, and landscape gardeners. You will now, doubtless, be interested in hearing something about the orators and writers of so brilliant an epoch.

Corneille, for instance, was a tragic poet, who wrote plays so fine that they are now French classics, and are still given by the most prominent actors. Racine, his friend and rival, worked in the same field, and it was he, as we have seen, who supplied Madame de Maintenon with suitable plays for her girls. Molière, on the other hand, was the first great French comedian.

In spite of his genius, Molière was scorned by the courtiers because his father was only a small tradesman; and even the palace servants, imitating their betters, were rude to him. But the king, who enjoyed Molière's plays, put an end to this state of affairs by inviting the poet to breakfast one morning. While they were seated alone together, the king gave orders to admit the courtiers, and seeing their surprise, quietly said, "Gentlemen, please excuse me, but I am giving Molière his breakfast, because I hear that my lackeys consider it beneath them to associate with him!"

Needless to state, the king's footmen never again had a chance to offer Molière a dinner, for the nobles all vied with one another in inviting him to their tables. The

[1] See *Story of the Greeks*, p. 146; *Story of the Romans*, p. 197.

author of many immortal comedies which ridicule the follies of his day and the vices and weaknesses of his time, Molière was also a talented actor, and was on the stage when overtaken by his last illness.

The gentle, absent-minded fable writer, La Fontaine (fôn-tĕn′), delighted everybody in those days with his witty tales of animals and people, which have since supplied the French with a great number of good proverbs and apt quotations. Another member of the literary circles of the time was Boileau (bwä-lō′), who wrote satires, a poem on the Art of Versification, and some flattering odes about Louis XIV. When he brought the latter to the king for his approval, even Louis XIV. must have deemed them a trifle fulsome, for he once said, "I should praise you more had you praised me less!" Still, although a born courtier, the witty Boileau could tell the truth with tact when he chose to do so. For instance, when the king once wrote some verses and asked his opinion of them, Boileau promptly said: "There is nothing impossible to your Majesty. You wished to make some bad verses, and you succeeded admirably!"

La Fontaine.

The most famous letter writer of the times was Madame de Sévigné (sā-veen-yā′), who conveyed all the news of the court to her married daughter, in able and sprightly letters that are admired by all who read them. La Bruyère (brü-yâr′), another famous writer of this reign, is now mostly known for his wise maxims, which are as familiar in France as "Poor Richard's" are in the United States.[1]

Among the great orators and preachers who had the opportunity not only to lecture to the king and court, but also to instruct the royal children, were Bossuet (bō-sü-ĕ′), who wrote a history of the world; Fénelon (fā-n'-lôN′), author of a French version of the classical tale of *Telem'achus;* and Fleury (flẽ-ree′), compiler of a Church history. During Lent, or when some great person died, magnificent sermons or funeral orations were delivered by famous preachers, some of whom, it is said, did not hesitate to tell even the king that he should do his duty. We know that occasionally this preaching had a salutary effect, for Louis XIV. once remarked to one of them: "Father, I have heard many great orators, and I have been well pleased with them, but every time I have heard you I have been displeased with myself."

The king, whom every one still envied and flattered, was really a sad and discontented old man, and his reign, which had begun so gloriously, was slowly drawing to a dreary end. Madame de Maintenon, in one of her letters, clearly intimates that the positions of king and courtier had their drawbacks, by writing, "Save those who fill the highest stations, I know of none more unfortunate than those who envy them!"

[1] See *Story of the Thirteen Colonies*, p. 203.

The king's sadness in old age was due to his many cares and also to family losses; for his son, the Dauphin, died in 1711, and one year later, the second Dauphin, Louis's grandson, was carried off with his wife and eldest boy by smallpox, a disease then causing great ravages everywhere. Louis's heir and successor was, therefore, his second great-grandson, who was only five years old when his great-grandfather's long reign finally came to an end.

After begging his courtiers' pardon for the bad example he had given them, and imploring them to be loyal to his successor, Louis XIV. spoke a few memorable words to his child-heir, saying: "Try to keep the peace with your neighbors. I have been too fond of war. Do not imitate me in that, nor in my too great expenditure."

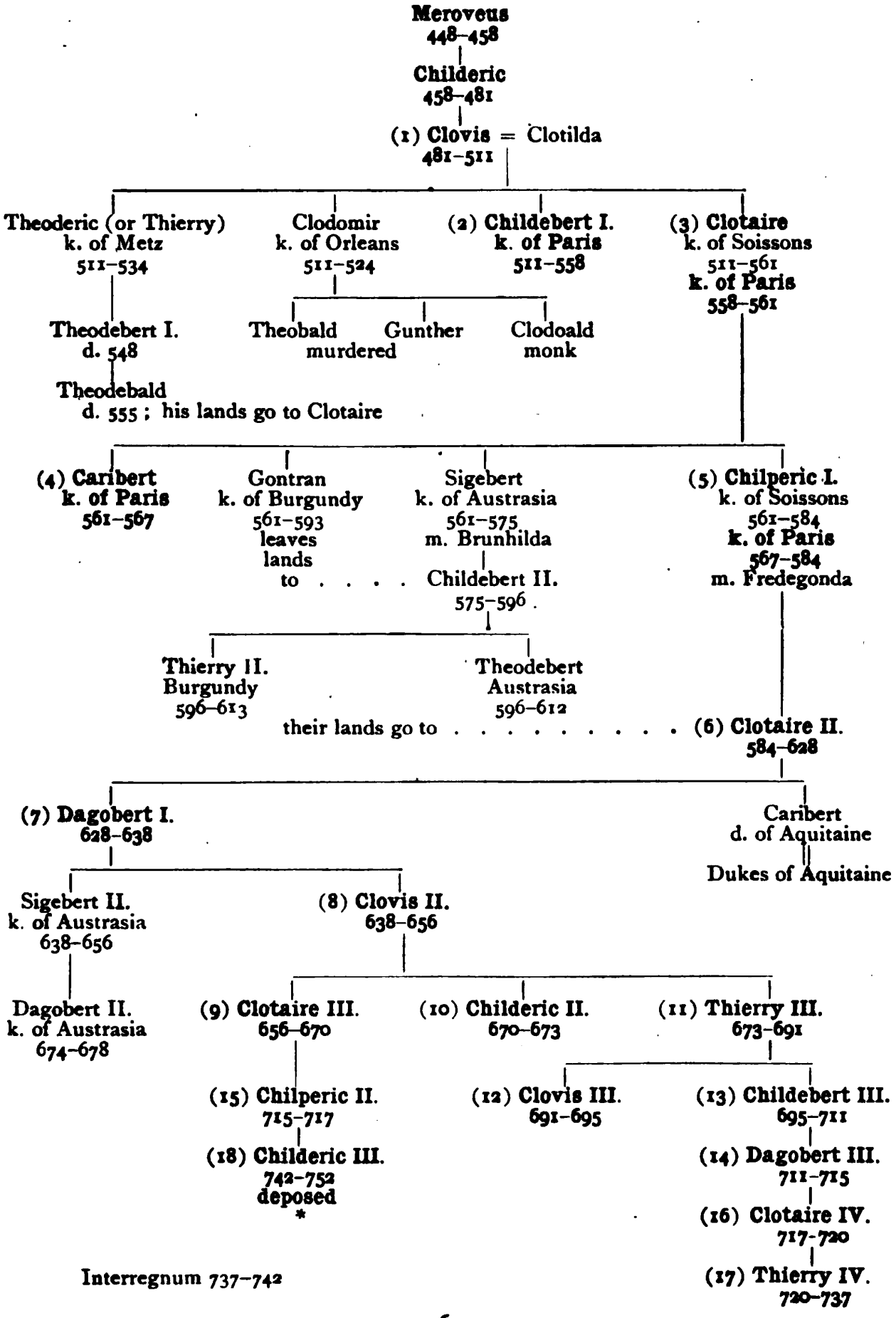
Somewhat later he fell into deep slumber; and Madame de Maintenon, thinking he would never be conscious again, left the palace and took refuge in St. Cyr, where she was to end her days. But presently Louis opened his eyes again for the last time, and seeing a page in tears, gently inquired: "Why do you weep? Did you then imagine I was immortal?" A few minutes later, the Great Monarch's reign was over.

With Louis XIV., it may be said, ended also the days of the glorious Old France whose story you have read. Little did he dream of the great changes which were to take place in the next hundred years, — although they were in part due to causes he himself had set in motion, — and which were to make the story of Modern France of thrilling interest.

PDF created by Rajesh Arya, Gujarat (20 Feb 2025)

GENEALOGY OF THE MEROVINGIAN RACE

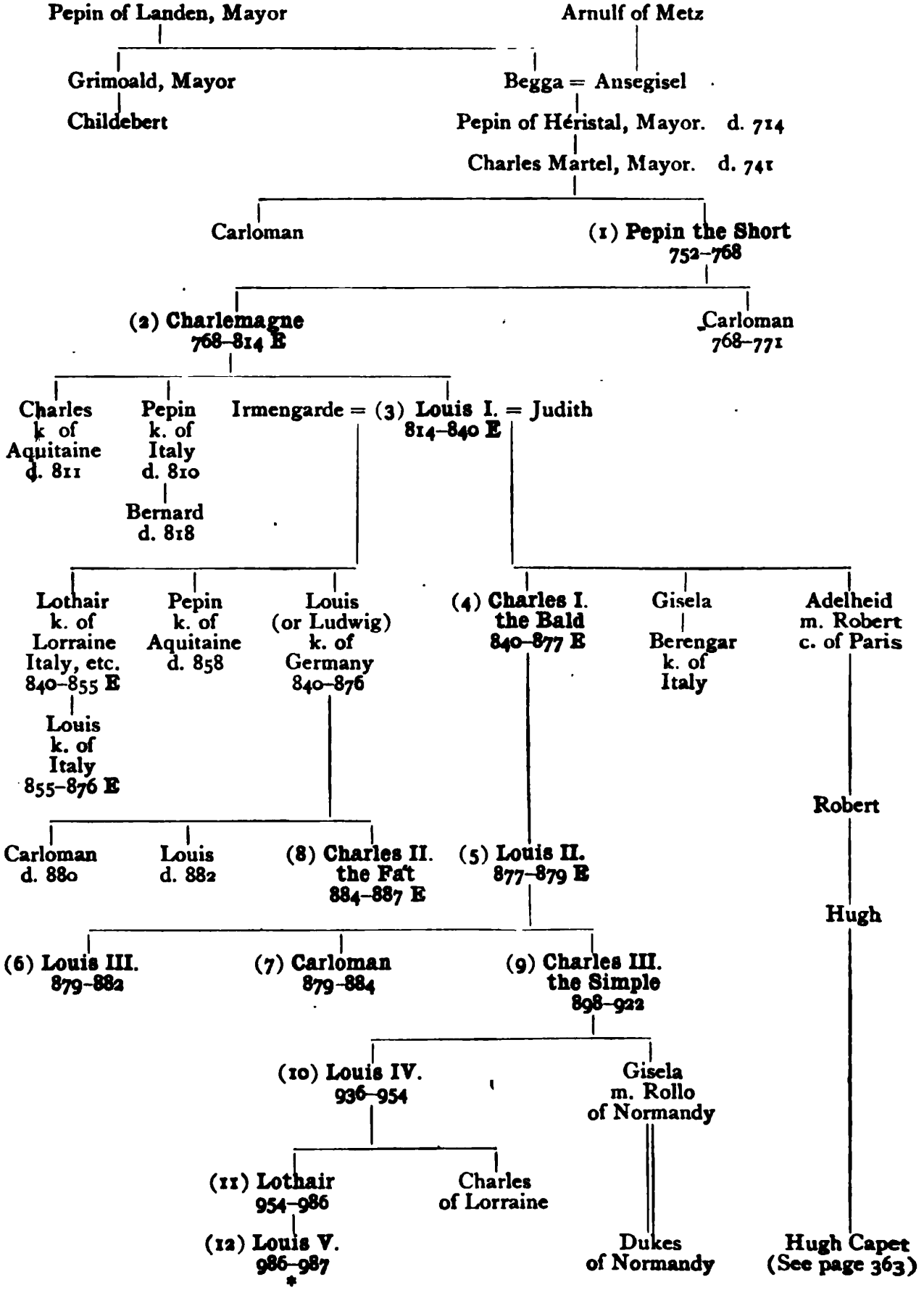
NUMBERS GIVE ORDER OF KINGS IN PARIS



GENEALOGY OF THE CAROLINGIAN RACE

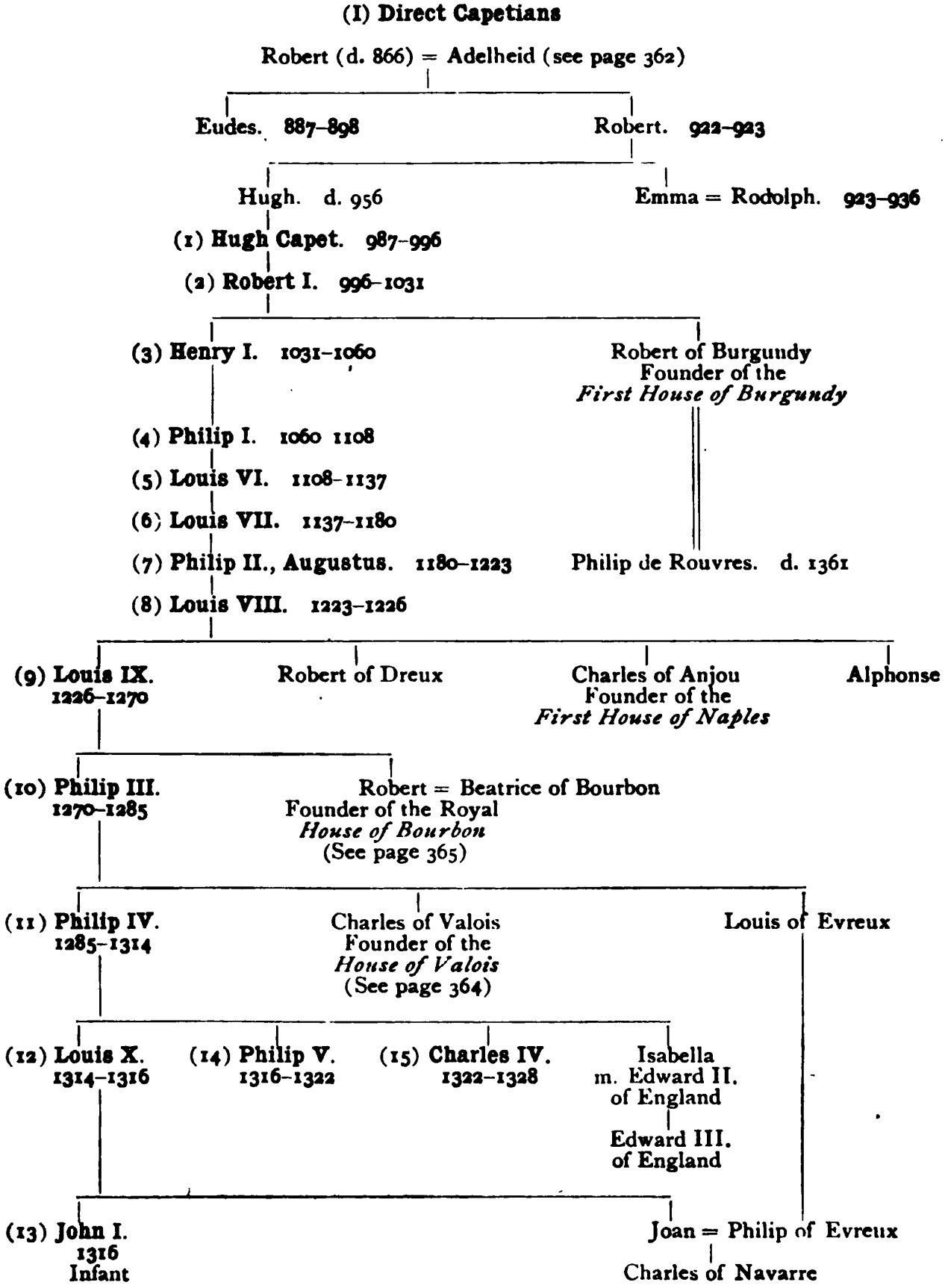
NUMBERS GIVE ORDER OF RULERS IN FRANCE

E = emperor



GENEALOGY OF THE CAPETIAN RACE

NUMBERS GIVE ORDER OF KINGS



(II.) House of Valois

Charles of Valois, brother of (11) Philip IV. (See page 363)

(16) **Philip VI.** 1328–1350

(17) **John II.** 1350–1364

Second House of Burgundy

(18) **Charles V.** 1364–1380

John, Duke of Berry

Isabelle = Visconti

Louis of Anjou
Founder of the
Second House of Naples

Philip the Bold
d. 1404

(19) **Charles VI.** = Isabella of Bavaria
1380–1422

Louis of Orleans = Valentine of Milan
d. 1407

John the Fearless
d. 1419

Charles II.
d. 1481
leaving Naples
to Louis XI.

(20) **Charles VII.**
1422–1461

Catherine
m. Henry V.
of Eng.

Philip
d. 1467

(III.) **Valois-Orleans**

(IV.) **Valois-Angoulême**

(21) **Louis XI.**
1461–1483

Henry VI.

Charles, d. 1465

John of Angoulême

Charles the Bold
d. 1477

Charles, d. 1495

(22) **Charles VIII.**
1483–1498

Anne

Jeanne = (23) **Louis XII.** = Anne of Brittany
1498–1515

Maximilian = Mary

Philip = Joan

Claude = (24) **Francis I.**
1515–1547

Charles V.

(25) **Henry II.** = Catherine de' Medici
1547–1559

(26) **Francis II.**
1559–1560

(27) **Charles IX.**
1560–1574

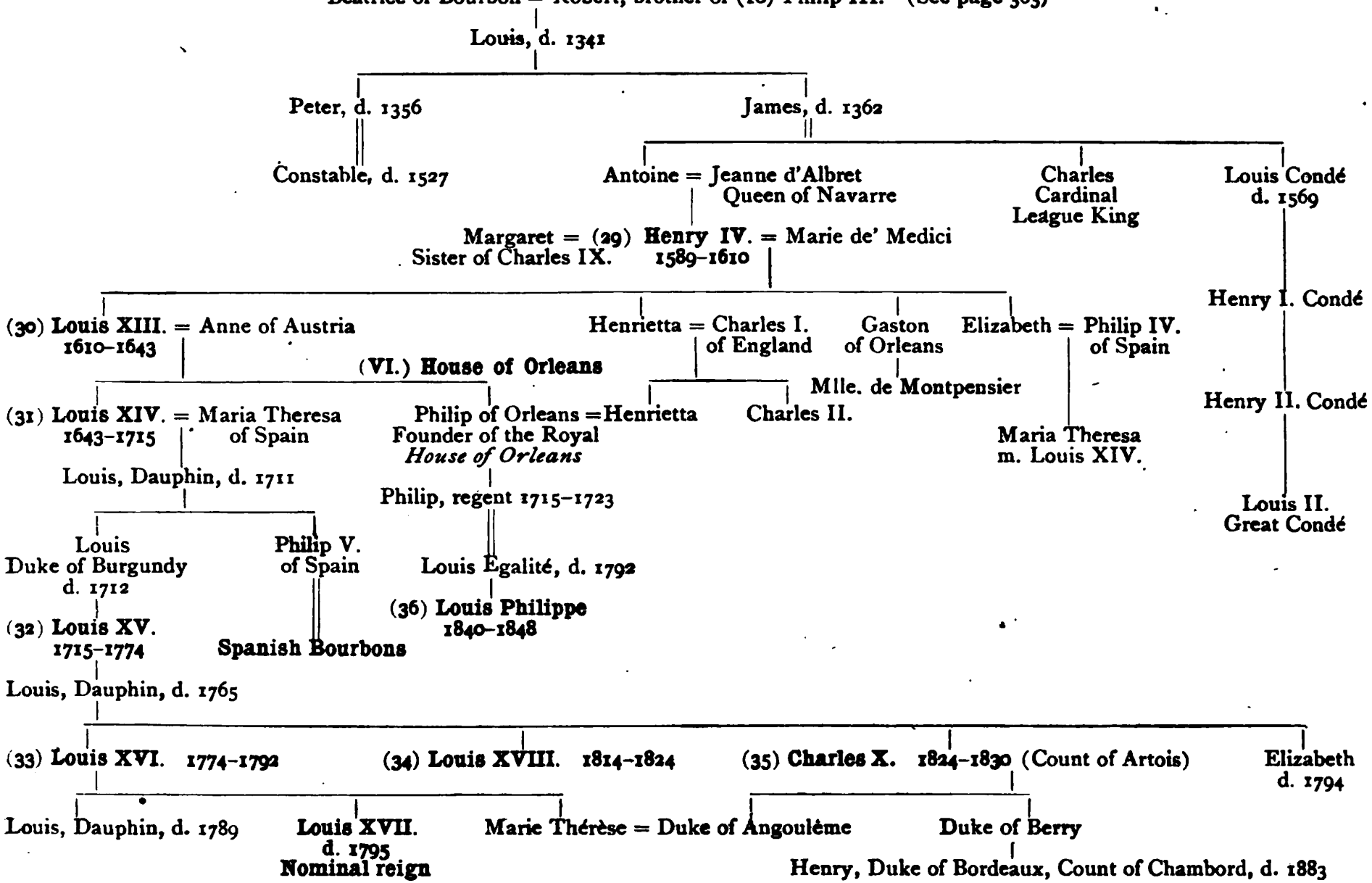
(28) **Henry III.**
1574–1589

Alençon

Margaret
m. Henry IV.
(See page 365)

Elizabeth = Philip II.
of Spain

(V.) House of Bourbon



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Key to pronunciation. — VOWELS: ā in lāte, ă in făt, â in câre, ä in fär, å in låst, au in author; ē in mē, ĕ in mĕt, ē in tẽrm; ī in fīne, ĭ in tĭn, ī in polīce; ō in nōte, ŏ in nŏt, ó in fór, oo in loop; ū in tūne, ŭ in nŭt, u̧ in ru̧de, ü = French u; ÿ in mÿ, ў in hўmn. CONSONANTS: ġ in ġem, in ġet, ĸ = German ch; N = French nasal, affecting the vowel before it like ng, but is itself not sounded; ş = z. *Italic letters are silent.*

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